

The
GLORIES
of
HEAVEN

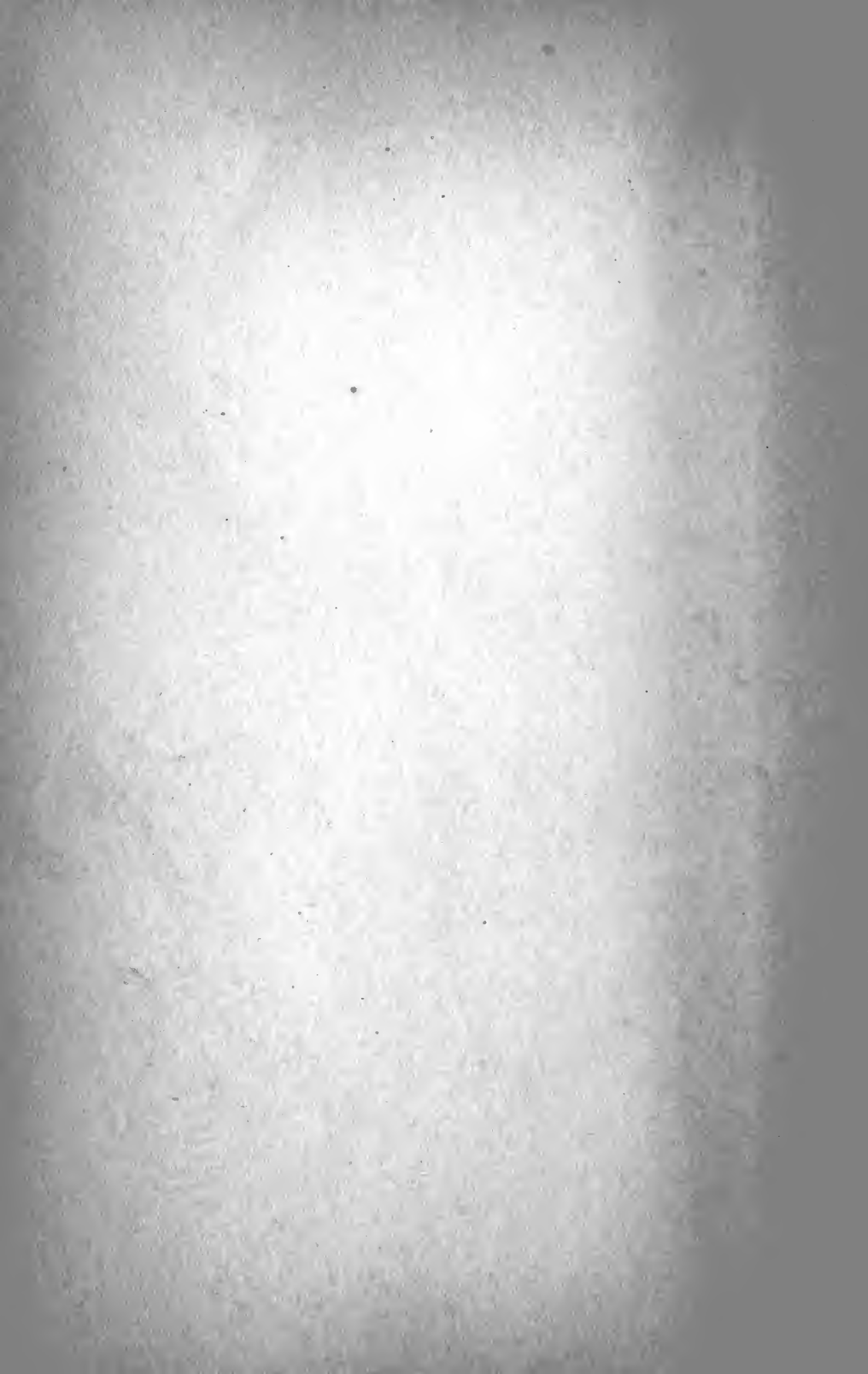
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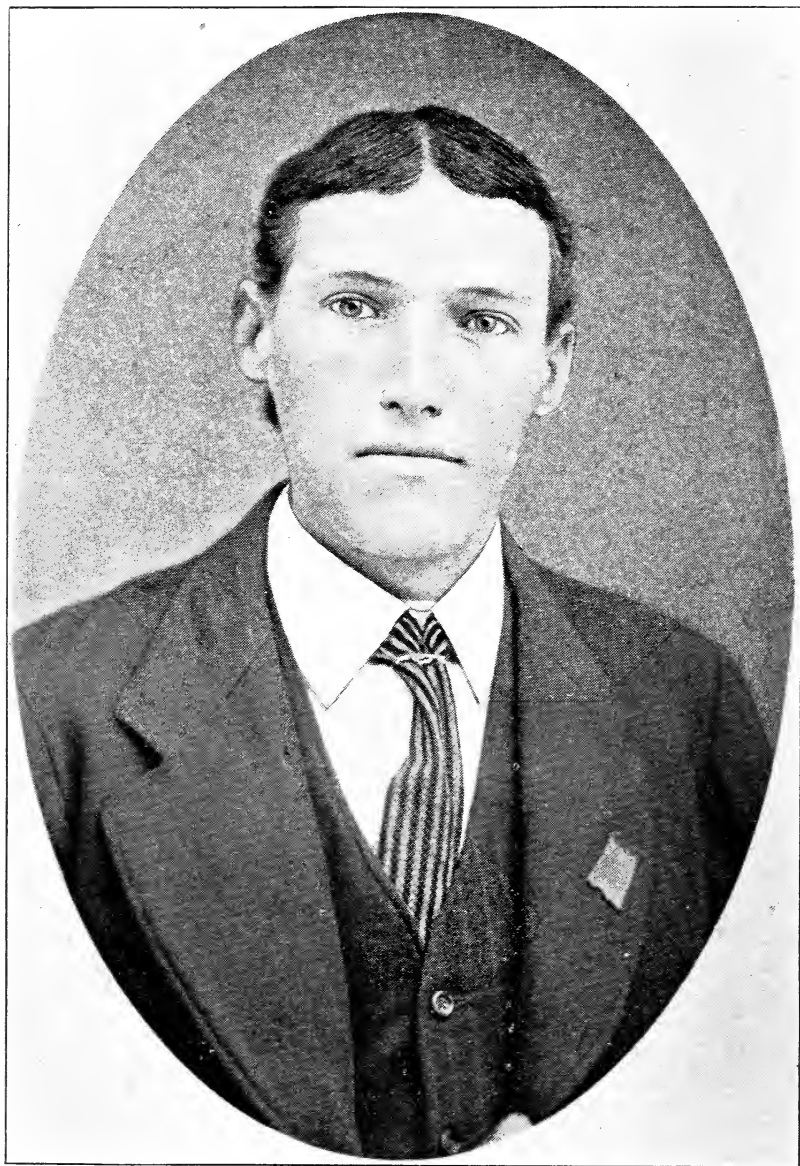
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J. RIGGS LONG

The Glories of Heaven

OR

The Blessed Estate of the Redeemed

IN TWO PARTS

Heaven Considered as a Local Habitation

AND

Heaven an Exalted Moral Condition

TO WHICH IS APPENDED

A CHOICE COLLECTION OF

Crown Jewels, or Golden Gleanings of Religious
Thought

J. RIGGS LONG

AUTHOR AND PUBLISHER, RIO GRANDE, OHIO

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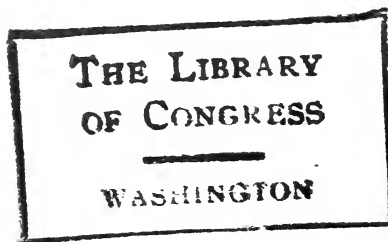
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To the Memory of my Sainted Mother

Mrs. Eleanor Riggs Long

**Wife of Joseph Long, Daughter of the Rev. John Riggs, Senior, Sister of
the Rev. John Riggs, Junior, late President of the Kentucky
Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church.**



To the Memory of that Mother, who in childhood's unclouded morning, taught me with zealous care, both by example and by precept, in the things that pertain to the Kingdom of God, whose intercessions at the Throne of Grace, in my behalf, ceased not while she lived to ascend the Holy Hill of Zion, and whose prayers for her children are continually being offered up on a golden censer, a sweet savor unto the Lord, around whose dazzling Throne, in robes of spotless white, she now sings the song of Redeeming Love, and from thence watches for my coming, as erst she did, when I was away from my earthly home.

To the Memory of that Mother, as a humble token of FILIAL LOVE, this little volume is affectionately inscribed by her only living son,

THE AUTHOR.



Dedicatory



GO forth, thou little volume, on thy mission of mercy and love. Go into the highways and by-ways of earth. And whithersoever thou goest, go in the power of the Holy Spirit, go in the name of the humble Nazarene. Be it thy mission to scatter LIGHT DIVINE, to help in thy humble sphere to reproduce, reflect and diffuse that holy, healing, renovating, refining and elevating Light which emanated from the Sun of Righteousness, when He arose "with healing in His wings"; which dawned over Judea's hills and Bethlehem's plain, when the angelic choir sang, "PEACE ON EARTH, GOODWILL TOWARD MEN"; that light which has raised our own beloved land to so eminent a rank among the powers of the earth, and redeemed the islands of the sea from the depths of degradation and cannibalism to be

flourishing, intelligent, Christian commonwealths.

Be it thy mission to shine and shine "until sad hearts look upward," until weary, despondent ones take fresh courage, until the drooping spirit of the care-worn pilgrim revive, until the "Key of Faith and Hope" shall unlock the door of "Doubting Castle," and the liberated ones pass out from the dark domains of "Giant Despair."

Enter thou the home where affluence and plenty dwell, and point the anxious devotees of mammon to the riches that do not "make to themselves wings and fly away, as an eagle." Enter thou the lowly hovel, where penury and want abide, and point the way to pastures green, and fields elysian.

To him who hath learned to know that "The tintings of hope on this storm-beaten earth melt like the snowflakes away," to him who hath grown weary of the emptiness of earthly schemes and expectations, and even of mercenary emoluments and honors, and who, with the "Preacher," is constrained to

exclaim, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit," teach thou the simple lesson of faith and trust in God, whose promises are never at a discount, and whose reward is always with Him, "to give to every man according as his work shall be."

To the young man or woman, who is standing doubtingly and thoughtfully upon the threshold of life's activities, gazing into the future with earnest solicitude, scanning the various paths that lead divergingly outward and onward across the broad field of human possibilities, and anxiously asking the question, "Is life worth the living?" to such an one show thou the excellencies of that "strait and narrow way," that leads from the "City of Destruction," up to the "Celestial City"—that path which is "as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day"—the path marked by the footprints of Jesus, and illumed by the Holy Spirit—the King's Highway of Holiness.

To the aged and infirm traveler on life's rugged journey, "Whose latest sun is sinking

fast, Whose race is nearly run, Whose hardest trials now are past, Whose triumph is begun," to whom earth's fairest prospects have lost their former interest; to such an one spread thou the feast of fond anticipation, and bid him pluck the fragrant flowers, and partake of the luscious fruits that spring profusely on the verdant banks of the stream of Spiritual Meditation, and that grow luxuriantly and spontaneously from the rich soil of the consciousness of a Well-Spent Life.

And to him who is still traveling the downward road, away from light, and life, and liberty, toward outer darkness and utter destruction, who is bartering the momentous interests of the endless future, for the evanescent and unsatisfying pleasures of the present; to him, call thou "with no uncertain sound," and point to the three open Gates of Mercy on either side of the "Celestial City," which proclaim "*thrice welcome*" to every returning wanderer.

General Introduction

The Idea of Heaven a Universal Idea,— A Natural Intuition



BELIEF in immortality,—in a state of existence beyond this brief and transitory life, a state in which the spirits of the departed shall in some sense find respite from the toils and cares incident to this life, reparation or restitution for the wrongs here endured, and recompense for every noble, generous, heroic, or self-sacrificing deed,—which so often, in this world, go unrequited,—is an innate and natural idea in the human mind, an intuition common to mankind at large; for we find that it exists, not only in civilized and enlightened lands where philosophy and reason flourish, and where the surer light of Divine Revelation shines, but also among the most untutored and benighted races of earth's ten-

antry. Nevertheless men's conceptions of the nature of that state, or place, of felicity being modified by various external circumstances, such as the current traditions and prevailing customs and ceremonies of the times and countries in which they live, as well as by the diversities of their own temperaments and emotional natures, are—as might naturally be expected—as diverse and varied as are their ideals of the conditions and circumstances necessary to happiness in this present life.

To the Red Man of the American forest the greatest source of happiness is the chase, or the social dance around the camp-fires of the clan, or tribe. And his conception of the future state is that there awaits him somewhere—if he is noble-hearted, heroic, and brave—vast and rich *Hunting Grounds* where abundance of game is found, where perpetual summer abides, where perennial flowers bloom, where placid waters flow, or plunging cataracts foam, where, unmolested by the “pale-faces,” and undisturbed by kindred

foe, he may launch his birch-bark canoe, where he may feast to his heart's content on the luscious spontaneous fruits of the soil, where the camp-fire never goes out, and best of all—for he is no Atheist—where he may hold converse with the “Great Spirit.” And in fond anticipation of this blessed estate when he departs this life he has his bow and arrows, and sometimes, too, his favorite dog buried with him; for, says he, “I shall need them in the great *Hunting Grounds* beyond.”

To that important and numerous class of individuals whose pathway lies in the Valley of Toil, over whose heads often sweep the rude tempests of Misfortune and Adversity, at whose sides, day by day, walk the phantoms of Anxious Care, on whose labors the world is dependent for its daily bread and its necessary apparel, and on whose shoulders rests the burden of the most servile, onerous, and wearisome labors of life; to that class **REST** has special charms, surcease of corroding care is a boon greatly to be desired, and assurance of immunity from want, a most

important prerequisite to happiness. And so these weary and toil-worn ones look forward to the land of future blessedness as to a Sweet Haven of Rest, "a land flowing with milk and honey," a land where Sabbaths never end, and Toil never enters.

And he whose soul, like that of righteous Lot, is "vexed continually" with the doings of the reckless and vicious, longs for the land, "Where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

To the Esquimau, or the Laplander shivering with the intense cold, and dreading the long night of an Arctic winter the picture of the *Land Elysian*, by Fancy painted bright, is all aglow with the rosy tints of an unclouded tropical summer morning, and presents to his enraptured gaze all the glories and luxuries of a genial clime, where light and warmth predominate, and where hunger and want shall be forever unknown.

And for the swarthy sons of toil parched and tanned by the burning sun, the poisonous winds and the almost red-hot sands of the

Torrid Zone the picture presents a fertile oasis, the foliage of whose palm-trees never fades, whose living waters clear as crystal forever flow, whose balmy winds no obnoxious malaria bear, an oasis not circumscribed by a boundary of a few miles, but one whose area, and whose unwasting and unwaning fulness are coextensive with all the wants of all the sons and daughters of Adam's race. Every night he pitches his tent one day's journey nearer this beautiful land of plenty, which lies just beyond Jordan's placid, cooling waves, and by fond anticipation he sings,

"We'll pass over the River,
And rest under the shade of trees."

And so it is with man in every condition of life. In whatsoever circumstances he may be placed, in whatsoever country or clime he may live, whatsoever environments may predetermine his vocation, modify his ideals of happiness, or give color to the picture his fancy paints, or shape his creed, or belief, in regard to the Great Future, still we find unity in diversity, still we find in his picture

of Heaven one essential characteristic, one unmistakable mark of the Divine origin of the intuition; namely, that the felicity of that place of supreme happiness is not the result of mere chance, but is given by some Higher Power that presides over the destinies of men, as a *reward* for *virtue*.

Now since all men believe in the existence of a place or state of reward after this brief probationary life shall have come to a close, and that the life that shall dawn beyond the tomb, and beyond the confines of this sublunar sphere, beyond the realm of setting suns, and waning moons, and day's decline, shall be a life of unchanging and never ending happiness for the virtuous, no one can certainly afford to be indifferent or unconcerned in regard to anything that relates to that immortal state. As this, then, is a theme of absorbing interest, a theme in which you and I and all the world are personally concerned, let us, together, consider what light Divine Revelation sheds on the subject, to inspire us on our pilgrimage to the "Celestial City."

The Glories of Heaven

OR

The Blessed Estate of the Redeemed

PART I

... Heaven Considered as a Local Habitation ...

— :: —

**"I go to prepare A PLACE for you, that where I am
there ye may be also."**

— :: —

" In My Father's house are many mansions "

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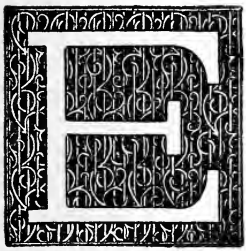
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Heaven Considered as a Local Habitation

CHAPTER I

General Remarks



YE hath not seen, ear hath not heard," neither hath the mind of man conceived "the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him," "for the things of the spirit are spiritually discerned"; and the natural man in his present finite condition is not susceptible of comprehending in all their fulness the glories of a state that is spiritual, immortal, and infinite. Hence it was that Christ so often taught in parables and represented that which is spiritual and immaterial, by that which is natural and tangible, and explained the hidden mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven by things familiar to His hearers. Hence it is that we find in the Bible, as in no other book, simplicity exalted to the plane of sublimity, and

sublimity displaying her most fascinating charms, her extreme loveliness, under the modest garb of simplicity. Hence it is, too, that we find Heaven, the home of sainted spirits, represented as a city that "lieth four square," having "a wall great and high," and "foundations garnished with all manner of precious stones," and "streets of pure gold," and "gates of pearl." The simple fact that God's Word represents the state of Future Blessedness under the similitude of a material city is, of itself, evidence sufficient that it is well for us—sometimes at least—to think of Heaven as a local habitation, a place prepared for God's chosen and prepared people. This material representation of God's spiritual kingdom is, no doubt, given in His revealed Word for our edification, that we may form some faint conception of the grandeur and glory of that blessed estate, whose realities we can never, never know, or conceive in full, until, "This mortal shall have put on immortality, and this corruptible shall have put on incorruption." Man as a finite being, a

creature of time and mortal sense, cannot comprehend the language of Heaven; but God deals with His children according to their capacity to comprehend, and their willingness to receive and obey His teachings. He says, "If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things?" Man though a fallen being, resting under a cloud of sin, with spiritual vision obstructed, with intellectual and spiritual susceptibilities and powers blunted, is nevertheless allied, in his nature, to the Divine, and may, by the assiduous cultivation of the higher powers, the noble traits, the godlike attributes of his nature, attain to a degree of moral excellence of which he himself can at present form but the slightest, the most vague and imperfect conception. For, says the inspired apostle, "Beloved, *now* are we the *sons of God*, and it doth not yet appear what we *shall be*, but we know that when He shall appear, *we shall be like Him*; for we shall see Him as He is." If we notice attentively the progressive nature of

Divine Revelation, the gradual development and unfolding of spiritual truth, in the ages that have preceded us, and how the faint glimmerings of the light of hope, that first dawned over the plains of the Euphrates in the vague promise to our forlorn and hopeless ancestors, that "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," was slowly, yet constantly, developing and brightening through symbol and sacrifice, law and prophecy, until, after the lapse of four thousand years, the light of a full and free salvation shone in splendor on honored Judea's hills, we may learn therefrom an important lesson; namely, that the spiritual heights accessible to man can only be ascended gradually. Then, since the brightest portrayals of the unspeakable glories of the home of sainted spirits are adapted by the Omniscient Creator to our present state of intelligence, let us now proceed to notice some of the lessons they are designed to teach.

CHAPTER II

The Massive Jasper Walls—Safety



IN the twenty-first chapter of that most wonderful Apocalypse, The Revelation of St. John, we read in regard to the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, that it hath "*a wall great and high.*" Now what lesson is that designed to teach? What inferences may we reasonably draw therefrom? Its meaning is certainly very clear. For what purpose are walls built around cities? Are they not obviously for the safety of those who dwell within? Have we not read how in ancient times, when war would arise, and fear would seize upon men's hearts, when danger was imminent and enemies gathered thick, how men would flee for life to the walled cities, and thus escape from the wrath of a foe whom they were not able to meet in open combat? And O what a sense

of relief and safety did they feel when once inside of the walls, if only the walls were well-built and secure! And have we not read, too, of the walled "Cities of Refuge," built by the Israelites, to which the man-slayer might flee from the avenger-of-blood and be safe, so long as he remained in the city, or until he could have his trial? Certainly a walled city is a fit emblem of refuge and safety. Yet walls by human hands constructed may be, and oftentimes are, by human hands demolished. But how is it in regard to "The city that hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God"? What of the safety of Heaven? Hath not Christ, the King of Glory, "led captivity captive"? Hath He not conquered Death, Hell, and the Grave, and arisen triumphant from the tomb, to reign forever and ever? And unto Him hath it not been said by the Eternal Father, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom, Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even Thy God,

hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows, and Thou, Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth; the heavens also are the works of Thine hands ”?

Then what a feeling of security, what a sense of safety from every ill,—a safety, a security, a serenity, deep, calm, profound—must take possession of the heart of every weary pilgrim, who hath fled from the “City of Destruction,” when he passes safely through the pearly gates, into the Celestial City! And O how much, how very much, there is, of comfort, of satisfaction, in that one little word SAFETY! How largely our enjoyment depends upon a sense of security! And O how perfect, how full, how complete is the security of Heaven! “Where moth and rust doth not corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal!” “Where sickness and sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more!” Satan hath been banished from that beautiful world of light, hurled headlong from the battlements of Heaven,

and nothing unholy or impure can enter there; and so through all the endless cycles of eternity, the safety, the security, the serenity, the sanctity of Heaven will be unbroken and unalloyed.

CHAPTER III

The Shining Pearly Gates

An Abundant Entrance

"For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ."



THE Holy Jerusalem, the Saint's Inheritance, the City of the Great King, hath twelve shining gates of pearl arranged as follows, viz: "On the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates." "And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day," and the day never ends, for "There shall be no night there." Now what is the import of all this? What signify the twelve gates continually standing—not, as we sometimes sing, "ajar," but—open wide? Beautiful emblem this, of the ease of ingress, of the accessibility of heaven, of the

abundance of entrance, for those who are worthy to enter there! On every side are three ways of entrance. Toward every land and nation, every race and condition of mankind, stands an accessible front, with portals open wide.

On the east and on the west, on the north and on the south—on every side of the Great City—one gate stands freely and invitingly open for the entrance of the “Lambs of the Fold,” the “Dear Little Ones” who, in infancy’s cloudless morn, and childhood’s stainless purity, are gathered in tender care, by the Great Shepherd, from this bleak and barren, desolate land, this world by sin and sorrow cursed, gathered safely into the Tender Shepherd’s peaceful fold. O hear the voice of the Savior tenderly calling, “Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not; for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.”

And O what a great multitude of little Innocent Ones, from palatial mansions, from

humble cottages, even from the rude tents of nomadic tribes, from every age and clime—"from the four winds of the earth"—have gone up to swell that mighty throng, and to join in the song of Redeeming Love! They have entered in through those pearly gates, and now are safe forevermore. On the wings of the morning their immaculate spirits have sped—escorted by an envoy of angels—to that City of Eternal Day, there to dwell forever with the Lord.

And on every side of the Celestial City one gate stands open wide for the admission of those who through faith in Christ have accepted salvation on the terms of the Gospel; those who have been born again, as Christ taught Nicodemus, (born of water and of the spirit), and having been born again, "have fought a good fight," "have kept the faith," "have overcome the world." And here is the passport given by the King of Glory: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and

am set down with My Father in His throne." And here is one of the many invitations He hath given us: "The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come'; and let him that heareth say, 'Come'; and let him that is athirst come; and *whosoever will*, let him take the Water of Life freely." WHOSOEVER WILL! O how broad the invitation! None are excluded. An open gate on every side of that Golden City! A gate open for you and for me, and for all the teeming millions of earth. The glories of that Heavenly Home invite us. God's Word invites us. The Holy Spirit invites us. The Church Militant invites us. And the Church Triumphant is waiting to welcome us.

And when we have passed the Jordan, and are come at last to the City of the Great King, as we look in admiration and wonder inexpressible upon the towering wall of Jasper, and hesitating and abashed draw nigh to one of those gates of purest pearl, just over that shining portal we may read,—I fancy,—inscribed in letters of living light, an invitation like this:

Come in ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Well done thou good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many. Enter thou into the joys of thy Lord.

Then, O what joy, what ecstasy, what raptures unspeakable will take possession of the soul! I imagine, as I stand there and gaze upon the dazzling brightness of the city, and read those words of welcome from my Savior, that I shall be so overpowered with the grandeur and glory of the scene that I shall scarcely know whether to enter or not. I imagine it will be difficult for me to realize that natural life, with all its trials and adversities, is *so soon* and forever passed, and that the resplendent city, before whose gates I stand, is to be forever my happy home. What a profound sense of gratitude will fill

our souls as we stand there and think of all that Christ has done for us, that we might inherit eternal life, and of how trivial, how insignificant after all, have been *our* trials, *our* afflictions, *our* burdens and *our* crosses compared to that "exceeding and eternal weight of glory" now to be revealed unto us. The veil of forgetfulness being drawn aside by the Angel of the Resurrection, and the limitations of our spiritual vision removed by that mysterious transformation from mortality to immortality, we shall comprehend as never before the magnitude of God's redeeming love; and we can but sing,

"'Tis Grace! 'tis Grace! 'tis wonderful Grace!
This Great Salvation brings!"

Likewise on every side of that City of Light one pearly gate stands continually open for the admission of those who have grown up in the darkness of heathen lands to the years of accountability, have acted their part and filled their places in the great drama of life, and stepped off of the stage of earth's activities, ignorant of the Revealed Law of

God, and of the grand scheme of human redemption provided through the atonement of Christ, who, never having heard of Him, could not be saved through faith in His name; and who have, notwithstanding all these unpropitious surroundings, lived noble, virtuous, heroic, generous and even magnanimous lives, measured by the light and knowledge accessible to them. "For," says the apostle Paul, who was 'a chosen vessel' 'ordained of God' to minister unto these benighted ones, "when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness." Hence we conclude that of the countless millions of Adam's race who, since time began, have thus lived and died without the light of Divine Revelation, a great multitude have doubtless passed in through these gates of the third class, and are now safely housed in that eternal City of Refuge; but as to their citizenship in heaven, or the

fulness of their inheritance, more, anon, when we come to speak of "Classes in Heaven."

"On the east three gates,"—*one* for the infant, *one* for the believer, and *one* for the virtuous heathen—and likewise, "on the north three gates," "on the south three gates," "and on the west three gates." O how complete the accessibility of Heaven to those who are worthy! How generous, how gracious the overtures of Divine Mercy! How importunate the pleadings and entreaties of a loving heavenly Father, urging His wandering children to return and "choose life that they may live." Heaven will be more glorious from the fact that no one who is worthy will be denied an admittance there. And yet many will fail to enter. How strange, after all that has been done to make Heaven and happiness attainable to mankind, that any should choose sin and its wages, rather than virtue and eternal life! How passing strange indeed that any should deliberately turn their backs on those shining pearly portals, to wander forlorn in the bar-

ren wilderness of sin! How unaccountable the delusion that must have taken possession of that soul which refuses "to have the man Christ Jesus reign over him," and yet submits himself a willing servant to a master who will place on him the *fetters* of sin, *bind* him with the *chains* of evil habit, and *lead him away* captive to the *dungeon* of everlasting despair! How wonderfully subtle that infatuation by which an innocent babe, a child of God, an heir of the kingdom of glory, as he advances in age, is often led, step by step, to depart from the Shining Way of Holiness, that leads onward and upward to the Portals of Eternal Peace, to lose all interest in Heaven, his rightful inheritance, and to become, at length, so estranged from his Father's love, and so averse to all that is pure and good, that, in the end, instead of entering, with joy and gladness, the Gates of Glory, he will turn away, and in the bitterness of his spirit, and from the depth of a self-imposed degradation, will "call for the rocks and the hills to fall upon him, and to hide him from the face

of Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and from the Lamb, forever and ever.'

Clad in garments of shame, covered with the defilements of sin, haunted with the memory of evil deeds, and burdened with the overwhelming weight of a guilty conscience the wicked will have no desire to enter, through the gates of Eternal Day, into the searching light of Heaven; but having so long "loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil," they will realize the fitness, as well as the justness of that awful denunciation: "*Depart from Me ye workers of iniquity.*"

But how brightly will dawn on the enraptured vision of the Redeemed the glories of that bright Celestial Morning. And as Christ, the King of Glory, with His children, the blood-bought and redeemed hosts of every age and clime, a mighty army of conquerors clad in robes of spotless white, approaches the Shining City how the Celestial Conclave will echo to the sweet strains of music and the glad shouts of triumph! Shall

you and I be in that Shining Retinue, that melodious immortal choir? Will it be our happy lot, as we draw nigh to the Pearly Portals of the Peaceful Paradise of God, to join in the sweet song:

1. High raise your heads, ye lofty gates,
For see, the King of Glory waits;
Ye everlasting doors, arise,
And make a passage as He flies.
2. But hark! the heavenly hosts inquire,
Who is this mighty conquering King?
In cheerful strains the answering choir
Lift high their voice and sweetly sing:
3. He is the Lord of boundless might,
High raise your heads, ye gates of light;
He conquered Death, and Hell, and Sin;
Fly wide, ye doors, He shall come in.
4. But hark! again the angels say,
Who is this mighty conquering King
Who rises to the realms of day;
Whose praise with such applause ye sing?
5. The Lord of boundless power possessed;
God over all, forever blessed:
The Lord of Hosts, the Most Renowned;
The King of endless glory crowned.

CHAPTER IV

Mount Zion, A City of Light

"And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for THE GLORY OF GOD did lighten it, and the LAMB is the light thereof."—REV. xxi, 23. "And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it."—REV. xxi, 24.



NLY partially and imperfectly do we realize the importance of the light of the sun, the centre of the solar system, to our comfort and well-being in this present life. The intimate connection that exists between physical light and animal life, and the absolute dependence of the latter upon the influence of the former, are facts but vaguely comprehended by the masses of mankind. Not only are we dependent on light for the gorgeous colors that adorn the rainbow, that beautiful symbol of God's mercy and love, or the radiant hues and mellow tints that leap forth in splendor sublime from the veil of an autumnal sunset sky, or

the more modest and no less graceful dyes that deck the lovely flowers and verdant foliage of glade and glen, of field and forest, and lend their mystic charm to every part of earth's variegated landscape. But we are also dependent upon the agency of light for the more commonplace and ordinary necessities of life. The bread that we eat, the clothes that we wear, and the fuel that we burn are but products, direct or remote, of the sun's rays, modified and adapted by Divine skill to man's multiform necessities. Yea, and the very life force that ebbs in our veins, the vitality and physical energies of our being,—that life-principle which we possess in common with all animate creation;—all these are God's gifts through the agency of light. But if such is the potency, and such the benign influence, of that light which is wholly physical, which comes to us, *not direct* from God, but through the medium of a material luminary—the sun—and is received and appropriated, utilized and appreciated by us through manifold earthly imperfections, what

must be the power and glory of that heavenly light which emanates direct from the throne of God, shines with unabated brilliancy over the elysian fields of glory, and is received and enjoyed by the unencumbered spirits of glorified immortals? Through the agency of light we receive our noblest impressions, our grandest and most sublime conceptions, both of the magnitude, and the matchless loveliness of the material universe. We look upon the modest violet beneath our feet, and learn the lesson of God's greatness from the consideration of His infinite condescension. Or we look out with enraptured gaze over the illimitable fields of trackless space, and read, in the light that comes down to us from myriads of shining orbs, the wonderful story of His ubiquity and omnipotence. So anxious are we to look into the hidden mysteries that lie around, beneath, and above us, that we call to the aid of our limited vision the latest devices of inventive genius, and by means of the microscope, the telescope and other more modern inventions we gaze with delight upon

many lovely scenes that were aforetime concealed from our view. If so much may be learned and so much enjoyed in this life, through the mission of light, what shall we say of the fulness of knowledge and of the heights of ecstasy that will be ushered in upon us when, by our Father's hand, the veil of mortal limitation is removed from our sin-beclouded vision, and instead of this earthly light, now so highly prized, shall dawn upon us the perfect light of Mount Zion?

For how vastly superior, how transcendently glorious must be that light which emanates from the Sun of Righteousness, the King of Glory, and proceeds from the throne of God and the Lamb undimmed by cloud or mist and unsullied by aught that is imperfect or impure. That light is the light of holiness immaculate, of purity untarnished. How far exceeding in loveliness and grandeur the scope of human comprehension, or even the loftiest flights of human fancy, must be the glory of the Celestial City, thus illumined by direct effulgence from the throne of the Eter-

nal, thus lighted by the approving smile of a loving Father! Even the inhabitants themselves shall be clad in a vesture of light: for "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever." How ineffable, then, must be the glories of the City of our God!

Land of perfect beauty,
World so bright and fair,
When will angels call me?
O when shall I be there?

CHAPTER V

The River of Life

"And he shewed me a pure river of WATER OF LIFE clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."—
REV. xxii, 1.



WHAT signifies this crystal flood, this flowing fountain, this WATER OF LIFE? Its import we cannot now fully understand, but it is certainly symbolical of the abundance of that life which was purchased for man by the blood of the atoning Lamb. When Christ was crucified and was hanging upon the cross, one of the Roman soldiers pierced His side with a spear and there issued therefrom both blood and water. When Jesus conversed with the woman of Samaria, at Jacob's well, He said unto her, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink: thou wouldst have asked of Him,

and He would have given thee Living Water.” “Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into Everlasting Life.” From these and other passages of like import, found in the teachings of Christ Himself, it appears that those who have, “by adoption and free grace,” become heirs of the Spiritual Kingdom are, even in the present life, made partakers of that Living Water. But while these Living Waters are, in the Kingdom of Grace, fitly represented by a gushing fountain, “a well springing up,” they are, in the Kingdom of Glory, in their abundance, like unto a majestic river, a grand, an inexhaustible, a never failing stream, flowing quiet, constant, placid, pure to the remotest bounds of the heavenly Canaan.

Spring up, spring up continually in our hearts, O thou blessed well of Living Waters! Flow on, flow on, forever flow, thou majestic River of Water of Life, thou blessed stream of immortality! While in this wilderness we

are camping, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness"; but when we shall have gone over to possess "that goodly land," and have taken up our abode in that City of God, where flows the great River of Life, no thirsty soul will then be found. O how abundant the provision God hath made for the happiness of His children in that blessed Land Beyond! There from LIFE'S CRYSTAL RIVER we may drink and be forever SATISFIED. There from LIFE'S FAIR TREE we may pluck fruit ambrosial, and never know aught of hunger or want. There may our care-worn and world-weary spirits find sweet rest and recreation, and enjoy, under the shadow of those "healing" leaves, perfect immunity from all the ills of earthly life.

How highly we prize this mortal life, and how reluctant we are to lay it down, notwithstanding its reverses and trials, its sorrows and sad bereavements! But, if this present brief life is so desirable, what estimate shall we make of the value of that ETERNAL LIFE, which is the gift of God, and which was

purchased for us at such wondrous cost!

LIFE, LIFE, EVERLASTING LIFE! Who can compute its worth, or measure its sublime possibilities? Or who can conceive the richness, the fulness, the completeness of the glories sempiternal, of the joys elysian, that await God's elect children when they shall have assembled on the peaceful banks of that beautiful river?

“When we've been there ten thousand years.

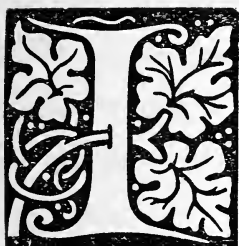
Bright shining as the sun,

We've no less days to sing God's praise

Than when we first begun.”

CHAPTER VI

The Robes the Ransomed Wear



WILL greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with jewels." Thus sang the prophet Isaiah about seven hundred years before the advent of Christ. "These things saith the AMEN, the faithful and true WITNESS, I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed." Such was the admonition to the church of the Laodiceans.

The Christian religion is not designed to rob life of its charms, or to detract aught from its legitimate pleasures, or true nobility; it is

not its purpose to make young people prematurely old, or to render old people "long-faced," melancholy, austere and unlovable; but on the contrary, its mission is to add to the natural graces of life that higher charm, that more exquisite loveliness which springs from conscious integrity and is sustained by living in harmony with the higher laws of one's being, and by cultivating a trustful, childlike confidence in the guidance and protection of Divine Providence. For,

"The faithful child, whose earnest eye
Strives after all things pure and high,
Shall take their image, by and by."

Hence it is that he who embraces and assimilates Christianity in its purity and its fulness, who is guided by the principles, and actuated by the Spirit of its Great Founder becomes, in deed and in truth, "the light of the world," and "the salt of the earth." What perennial sources of spiritual beauty, what profound depths of moral grandeur spring to light in the life, glow in the genial smile, and shine in the sparkling eye of that child

of God, who is indeed clothed with the garments of salvation, and covered with the robe of righteousness, whose self-will is submerged in the will of an all-wise Heavenly Father, whose "life is hid with Christ in God," and whose highest aspirations are to glorify His name, and to grow into His image!

But this present life is only the formative period of our inchoate spiritual existence. All that we see—all that we may attain—of moral beauty, of spiritual excellence in this world is only life in its incipency, the faint tintings of the rising dawn of a more excellent life beyond. Then since Christian character may attain to heights so enviable, and Christian manhood and womanhood acquire, even here, so much loveliness and true magnanimity, what shall we say of the robes of righteousness the ransomed shall wear around our Father's throne? Let us hear what the Revelator says, "And unto her"—to the Bride, the Lamb's wife—"was granted that she should be arrayed in FINE LINEN, CLEAN and

WHITE: for the fine linen is the RIGHTEOUSNESS OF SAINTS.” “And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, Who are these which are ARRAYED IN WHITE ROBES? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said unto me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them WHITE in the blood of the Lamb.” “He that OVERCOMETH, the same shall be clothed in WHITE RAIMENT; and I will not blot out his name out of the BOOK OF LIFE, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels.” “Thou hast a few names even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments; and THEY SHALL WALK WITH ME IN WHITE: for they are worthy.” Beautiful indeed to look upon is a robe of spotless white! In all the realm of nature no more appropriate emblem of purity can be found; and nothing meets more fully our conception of harmony, and the law of fitness, than to behold an innocent babe arrayed in spotless robes of purest white. But in this our earthly habi-

tation how difficult, alas, the task, how nearly hopeless the attempt to keep our garments white! How unceasing the warfare that must be waged against dust and dirt, and how assiduous the labor and care necessary to keep ourselves even partially exempt from their encroachments. But when we enter through the pearly gates of the Celestial City, and are clad in Heaven's radiant habilaments, how different, *how very different*, our condition and our experience will be! Our robes will then never become soiled, and never grow old, will never lose their snowy whiteness, or their perfect purity, and protection of them will never more be to us a source of anxious care.

Spiritually considered the same holds true. How hard indeed it is for us, in this life, to keep ourselves unstained from sin. How vigilant, how prayerful, how zealous, how untiring we need to be that, "that wicked one" touch us not! That some unholy disposition, some unruly temper, some unhallowed desire, some malevolent propen-

sity, either inherited or acquired, lay not its foul hand upon us, to tarnish and defile us, we need to constantly watch and pray. We need continually to fly to that "Fountain which was opened in the house of David, for sin and for uncleanness." And with the inspired Wesley, we sing, "Every day, every hour, Let me feel Thy cleansing power." Not so in Heaven! When we have passed the Shining Portals of the Glory Land, and been clothed in white, when we have reached Our Father's House on high, and by Him been welcomed to our Eternal Home, all glory to God, Our Great Redeemer, we will then be beyond the reach of the enemy of our souls, beyond the confines of sin and sorrow, beyond the domain of dust and decay, beyond the conflict, the toil and care of earthly life, beyond doubt and fear and grief, and even beyond death, the last earthly foe.

Beyond It All

1. "Beyond this land of parting, losing and leaving,
Far beyond the losses darkening this,

And far beyond the taking and the bereaving,
Lies the 'Summer Land of Bliss.'

REFRAIN.

"Land beyond so fair and bright!
Land beyond, where is no night!
'Summer Land,' God is its Light.
O, happy 'Summer Land of Bliss!'

2. "Beyond this land of toiling, sowing and reaping,
Far beyond the shadows darkening this,
And far beyond the sighing, mourning and weeping,
Lies the 'Summer Land of Bliss.'

3. "Beyond this land of sinning, fainting and falling,
Far beyond the doubtings darkening this,
And far beyond the griefs and dangers befalling,
Lies the 'Summer Land of Bliss.'

4. "Beyond this land of waiting, seeking and sighing,
Far beyond the sorrows darkening this,
And far beyond the pain and sickness and dying,
Lies the 'Summer Land of Bliss.'

CHAPTER VII

Palms of Victory, Crowns of Glory



NOT only shall the Ransomed Hosts of Heaven, the Redeemed of the Lord, wear robes of SPOTLESS WHITE, emblematic of purity of life, and holiness of heart; but in their hands they shall bear Palms of Victory, tokens of battles bravely fought and won, on the battle-fields of earth, over the allied armies of Sin and Darkness, the powers of Evil within and without. "And lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues stood before the Throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and PALMS IN THEIR HANDS; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb." And furthermore on each saintly brow shall rest a crown

of never fading glory. They who in this life have been reviled and lightly esteemed, and have endured many privations and persecutions for Christ's sake, shall, in the life to come, be "heirs of God and joint-heirs with His Son," Jesus Christ, and with Him reign in Glory forever and ever. To him who hath believed on His name and enlisted in His service, He says, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee A CROWN OF LIFE." And again He says, "Behold I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy CROWN." How precious the promise! A CROWN OF LIFE! Who can fathom the depth of meaning these words are designed to convey? Who can comprehend their sublimity? How inadequate the capacity of mortal man to estimate the value of such a crown! What is it that earthly potentates have not done for the sake of a crown? And yet what a bauble, what a mere nothing, what a mockery, what a delusion is *such a* crown, compared to that which Christ the King of Glory has in reserve for you, and for me, and

for every one of His followers who "overcometh" the world! Ours will be a Crown of Life Everlasting, of Glory Unceasing, of Rejoicing and Gladness Unalloyed, of Holiness Immaculate, of Triumph and Victory Complete; yes *Complete* through "Him who hath loved us, and hath washed us from our sins in His Own precious blood!" A Crown that will never grow heavy, or be a source of weariness to the brow that wears it. A Crown whose jewels never tarnish, and whose lustre never grows dim. A Crown not sullied by use, but which grows brighter by being often cast in grateful homage at the feet of Him that sitteth upon the Throne. A Crown achieved not at the cost of war and carnage, of devastation and ruin wrought among our fellow men, but one whose brightest diadems are the living crystalizations of deeds of kindness, of sympathy, of brotherly love, of forbearance, of self-sacrifice "In His Name." A Crown not placed on the victor's head by the hand of a fickle populace, who to-day are ready to confer on the hero the highest

possible emoluments, and to-morrow are equally ready to trample his honor in the dust; but a Crown in perpetuity placed on the brow of spotless innocence by that Hand "with whom is neither variableness nor shadow of turning." A Crown that will not make the wearer conceited or arrogant, that will not place a barrier between its possessor and the lowliest of God's creatures. The Crown of a perfect character, of a life rounded, developed, symmetrical, tried and refined by the fires of adversity, and ornate with the excellencies of all the Christian Graces.

CHAPTER VIII

Reunion in Heaven

I think I should mourn o'er my sorrowful fate,
If sorrow in Heaven can be,
If no one should be at the beautiful gate,
There watching and waiting for me.



LONG ago hath it been said,
"Earth hath no sorrow
Heaven cannot heal;" and
of all the sorrows known
to mortal man, there is none
so bitter, so overwhelming, so heart-rend-
ing, as would be the sorrow of bereave-
ment, of separation from our loved ones, did
we but believe that such separation would be
final, that when we close the eyes of our
kindred in death, they never more should
look in love upon us, and when their tongues
are cold and silent, that we should hear their
gentle accents, their loving words, their kindly
greetings no more. As we consign to their
last earthly resting place the mortal remains

of our friends, and listen to the solemn dirge, "Earth to earth, and dust to dust," how forcibly does Job's earnest inquiry press itself upon us; "If a man die, shall he live again?" And even when with unwavering faith, and positive assurance, we can answer that important question in the affirmative, to be thus separated, for a time, from those whom our hearts hold dearest, is still a sore trial, a sad bereavement. But as we advance in years, and our friends, one by one, bid us adieu and pass on to the Celestial City we begin, by and by, to realize that our friends "over there" are more numerous than those that remain with us; and so the dark shadow of our earthly loss becomes gradually transformed into the light of joyous anticipation, and we close our eyes upon these scenes of parting, that we may, by faith, gaze upon the brighter scene of a glorious reunion, a reunion which lies before us at no great distance,—only the journey of a few fleeting days at most. But what will that reunion be like?

When we have been separated from our

friends here for only a few weeks or months, with what pleasure do we greet them again! What gladness fills our hearts as their words of welcome sound in our ears, as we look into their eyes sparkling with love, and read in their sunny smiles expressions of affection too potent and sincere to be translated into words.

Among all the sources of happiness pertaining to this mortal life there is none that yields more real enjoyment than does the association of those whose hearts are bound by the holy ties of sincere affection. And it matters not whether that affection be the outgrowth of affinity, or consanguinity, or has sprung from a mutual interchange of deeds of civility and kindness, or from a similarity of tastes and habits. Such a bond of union, whatever may be its origin, is often stronger than the love of life, and in the production of happiness few more potent factors exist. And if such is the ardor and power of our affections here, and such the intensity of the happiness that springs from congenial associa-

tions, what shall we say of the joys that shall thrill our yearning hearts, in that bright world beyond the tomb, when after long years of separation, we shall once more meet those whom our hearts hold dearest, shall meet them not to part again but to dwell with them forever?

How sweet it will be in that beautiful land,
So free from all sorrow and pain,
With songs on our lips and with harps in our hands
To meet one another again!

But, "Shall we know each other there?" Shall we recognize in their glorified and immortal state those with whom we have been associated in this earthly state? There is certainly no reasonable ground to doubt such recognition. Did not Peter, James and John recognize, on the Mt. of Transfiguration, the glorified spirits of Moses and Elijah, whom they had never seen in the flesh? And will they not recognize them again, when they meet around the Great White Throne? Much more certainly, then, shall we recognize those with whom we have been so intimate here.

To remember this earthly state implies a remembrance of the persons with whom we had to do, and by whom we were influenced in this life. To fail to remember the transactions of this life would be to cease to be worthy objects of reward or retribution. To assume that we shall not remember what has transpired here is virtually to claim that all our attainments here shall pass for naught, and that, when we enter upon that immortal state, we shall begin life *de novo*. But we shall not forget. Many facts in memory's casket may be covered up and lie dormant and concealed for a great while, we being entirely unconscious that we possess them, and suddenly, upon the occurrence of some extraordinary event, or the return of some link in the chain of association, they may lume up before us as vividly and distinctly as the events of the passing hour. Hence we may reasonably infer that, when mortal limitations and imperfections are superseded by a glorious immortality, the change in our knowledge will be that, whereas, "*Now we know*

in part, then we shall know even as we are known."

But granted that we shall recognize our fathers and our mothers, our brothers and our sisters, our children and our friends, as such, "over there," the question then arises, Shall we retain for them the same ardent affection, the same *peculiar* love that characterized our relationship here? And in the light of reason we answer, "When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality," then this *peculiar love*, which pertains to mortal life, shall in like manner be transformed and intensified into a more glorious, a more exalted, an immortal love, a love approximating more and more to that of the Divine Author.

But do the Glorified Immortals take cognizance of, and feel an interest in the affairs of their kindred on this side of the Jordan? Let Divine Inspiration answer. "And when he cometh home he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which

was lost. I say unto you that likewise joy shall be in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance." And again we are taught in the parable of 'the rich man' and Lazarus, his beggar brother, that the spirits of the lost departed ones remember their kindred in this world, and are anxious for their deliverance. And shall we believe that our friends in Heaven take less interest in us, or know less of our condition than did this lost wretch, who cared only for himself while in this world? From the foregoing considerations we may certainly conclude, with positive assurance, that our loved ones who have preceded us to the Glory Land are anxiously waiting and watching for our arrival. With what joy and gladness then shall we meet them and greet them on the plains of Light, and Life, and Love!

How fondly then should we cherish the remembrance of our departed sainted friends, not repining or murmuring at our loss, but rather rejoicing at their deliverance from the

sorrows of earth, and their admittance into the richness and fulness of the heavenly inheritance. And since we are, even now, by the abounding grace, and the exceeding rich promises of God, members of the same Spiritual Kingdom, with what thrilling ecstasies, with what inspiring anticipations should we look forward to the time when we shall be reunited to those whom we have not ceased to love. And having so full an assurance of the glories of that blessed state of reunion and heavenly communion, may we not, should we not, will we not, henceforth banish all sadness and gloom from our hearts, live in the light of God's love, rejoice evermore, and reflect in our lives the light which has shined so graciously upon us? "For the just shall live by faith," and "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

CHAPTER IX

The Activities of Heaven



HERE remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God," says the great apostle of the Gentiles; and rest will, no doubt, be one of the chief attractions of that heavenly home. Heaven will be a place of rest from all fatigue, from all wearisome toil, from all anxious care and from all the vexations, perplexities and ills of this mortal life. And yet that rest, while it will meet all the wants of the care-worn and way-faring pilgrim, will not be the rest of indolence and inactivity. Indeed the idea of a lazy man's Heaven—with nothing to do, nothing to desire, nothing to learn, nothing to anticipate, no hopes, no aspirations—would certainly be, not only undesirable, but actually repugnant, to the industrious and faithful toiler in the Master's vine-

yard, who has found his highest pleasure in this life in the active and faithful performance of service, and in aspirations for, and anticipation of a higher phase of being, a more exalted plane of existence in which he might more fully and effectively exercise his varied powers for the honor and glory of God. The person who expects to find nothing to do in Heaven but simply to rest, *rest*, REST, does not deserve any Heaven, and would not be capable of enjoying very much, even if his uttermost desires were gratified. His cup is a very small one, even though it should run over: for he has buried his talent in the earth, and has not developed in his own soul the susceptibility of enjoyment. But I praise God that such is not the Heaven that Christ, the Captain of our Salvation, hath gone to prepare for us. Heaven will be a state of ceaseless, though untiring activity, of aspiration and achievement, of desire and fruition, of progress unimpeded and development unlimited—a rest of activity and inspiration, not of lethargy and indolence. In the lan-

guage of the illustrious Stephen Olin—addressed to a graduating class, at Delaware, O.—“Nothing in reason, philosophy or revelation will justify the fear that the high intellectual attributes, with which the redeemed soul enters Heaven, may not find worthy and significant employment there.”

The desire for wisdom, the ardent yearning for high attainments, both intellectual and spiritual, are impulses in the human mind which bear the seal of Divine approval. Solomon chose wisdom, and asked for it of God, in preference to the emoluments of wealth, or great victories over his enemies, and God was so well pleased with his choice that He granted him, not only the desire of his heart, the burden of his prayer, but conferred upon him also great riches, long life, and kingly honors such as never, before or since, earthly potentate enjoyed. But great as was Solomon's wisdom, who would presume that he was satisfied with his attainments in knowledge in this life, or that when he passed to the higher sphere of an immor-

tal life, his desire to know, to search into the hidden mysteries of the works and ways of God, was in any manner abated? Does not inspiration clearly teach that the present life is but the incipient stage of our being, only a stage of probation, of trial, of preparation, a stage in which we are to lay the foundation of character, to start our activities in the right direction, to train our varied powers in the merest rudiments of work, that we may be prepared to enter upon the higher stage of activity that awaits us in the life beyond? And when we shall have entered upon that immortal state, who will dare to say that there will be any bounds set to our progress, any limit prescribed to our attainments in knowledge, in holiness, in love, in the power to appreciate and enjoy the things that appertain to the Kingdom of God?

The Apostle Peter speaks of "*Exceeding great and precious promises whereby we are become partakers of the DIVINE NATURE,*" and if we are even now become partakers of that nature, which belongs in its perfection to God

alone, shall we not ceaselessly aspire, not only in this life, but more especially, and more successfully, in the life beyond, to approximate more and more closely to the glory and grandeur and the infinite perfection that belongs to that nature? But, "The multiplication of the finite can not produce the infinite," and while we may continually aspire, and continually advance toward that Infinite Paragon of Perfection, we can never reach it; but there will always be heights beyond yet accessible, and as in this earthly life, so in the heavenly, the more we know the more we will desire to know, and the nearer we approach, in nature, to God, the great Center of spiritual attraction, the stronger will become the force that impels us onward, the keener will become our susceptibility of enjoyment, the greater will become our capacity to receive, appreciate and appropriate the glories of that blessed estate. The very nature of the faculties of the human mind points with unmistakable certainty to the fact that they were created for a state of

ceaseless activity. It is by these faculties that we are allied to the Divine Nature; and were all their activities destined to cease, and the opportunities of progress to end with this life, then man were more a creature of time than of eternity; and this present time-world would embrace the all-important part of man's existence. We rejoice to know from the analogies of nature, and from the positive declarations of Divine Revelation, that such is not the fact, that our God-given powers are not of ephemeral duration; but that the pious student, the earnest seeker after truth, whether in the realm of nature or of Revealed Truth, may exultingly write down for his motto,

"I Study For Eternity."

CHAPTER X

Classes in Heaven



WILL there be classes, or grades, or diversities of capacity and enjoyment, or different degrees of reward or retribution in the future life? Or will all who enter the Pearly Gates enjoy equally the felicities of Heaven? We will not question our own preconceived notions, in regard to this matter, but will appeal directly to the Sacred Oracles whose answer is clear and unequivocal. "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the LEAST in the Kingdom of Heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called GREAT in the Kingdom of Heaven."

"And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man *accord-*

ing as his work shall be." When those afflicted with physical maladies, or plagued with evil spirits, appealed for aid to the Great Physician, who went about through the world "*doing good*," His usual reply was, "*According to thy faith so be it unto thee*"; and thus the faith of the individual was made the measure of the blessing bestowed. And we are exhorted to "Ask largely that our joys *may be full*," thus showing that *fulness of joy* is conditioned on our own voluntary acts. And again we are assured that, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Now it is evident, that all do not possess equally great faith, that all do not ask equally great things of God, that all do not pass through an equal degree of trial, affliction and persecution; hence it is apparent that when every man is rewarded "*according as his work shall be*," that all will not receive an equal reward.

And again we read of "that disciple whom Jesus loved," implying, of course, that the

Master, Himself, with His great love for all mankind—even for His worst enemies—possessed, nevertheless, a peculiar love, a special attachment, an intimate friendship, for a particular one of His disciples, exceeding that which He possessed for any other. If some are on more intimate terms with the Master than others, in this life, will they not likely be so in the life to come? Death works no moral transformations, and the moral status of the individual will determine the nearness of his approach to the Throne of the Immaculate, and so will be the measure of his felicity in the Kingdom of Glory.

But what of the parable of the laborers, you ask, who were hired at different hours of the day to work in the vineyard, of whom some served but one hour, and that in the cool of evening, while others toiled through the heat and burden of the long weary day, and yet they received at eventide every man a penny? This parable is often interpreted as teaching equality of reward regardless of diversity of merit; but such an interpretation

of it is not only out of harmony with the tenor of the Scriptures in general, but is an open, though unintentional, impeachment of Divine Justice. In order that we may understand the real import of the parable, let us notice carefully the conditions. "And about the eleventh hour," we are told, that is about 5 P. M., "he went out and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, 'Why stand ye here all the day idle?' They say unto him, '*Because no man hath hired us.*'" Now is there any real difference of merit here expressed? These last had not been idle from choice. Each accepted the first invitation given him. Each embraced the first opportunity. What more could he do? Perhaps those hired at the eleventh hour were just as willing workers as those hired at the first. But how can a man labor for another unless he be employed and instructed? And how can a man do the things that pertain to righteousness, unless he, first, be informed of his duty toward God and his fellow men? The import of the parable is obviously this;

that men will be rewarded in accordance to the opportunities they have accepted or rejected, and not necessarily in proportion to the amount of work they may have accomplished, or the number of years they may have been employed in the Master's service. It is applicable to the man who has lived in "lands benighted" until he has reached the evening of life, and who, as soon as the Light is revealed to him, embraces the truth and walks in that Light, and it places him on an equality with the man who has been all his life long in the service, provided that the two have been equally zealous in the improvement of their opportunities. And it applies to the thief who, on the cross, in his dying hour, repented, believed, and was saved, never before having had knowledge of the way of salvation. And in the language of an eminent divine,—the Rev. John Riggs,—“No man can tell just how low down in the Valley of Death God's Spirit may follow a man with the offer of Life Eternal.”

But it is not applicable to the man who has

had invitation after invitation to enter the Master's vineyard, and yet has stood idle until the evening shades of life have drawn on. Such an one may, perhaps, through mercy, yet be saved, but his lost opportunities are irretrievable; he can never be what he might have been; he can never receive the reward that he might have received; he can never win the laurels and wear the crown that might have graced his brow; and every slighted invitation is but another mountain of difficulty built by his own hands between him and Heaven, and renders his return to God, and his final salvation, yet more and more improbable. And no one can tell how soon God's Spirit may cease to strive with him!

But will there be any dissatisfaction or discontent in Heaven in consequence of an inequality of reward and of enjoyment? Will there exist in Heaven any spirit of emulation or rivalry? Certainly not; for no one will find admittance there who has not attained to that degree of moral excellence that

will exclude all selfishness and cause him to love his neighbor as himself. So even if he who is "least in the Kingdom of Heaven" is conscious of the fact of his inferiority, he will rejoice, not only in his own blessed estate, but also in the greater blessedness of those who have reached higher attainments than himself. Besides this the reward and enjoyment of each will be commensurate with his capacity to receive and enjoy. Every one who is so fortunate even as to barely pass through the shining portals into that City of Eternal Day will find his cup of rejoicing full to its utmost capacity, "shaken down, pressed together, and running over." Yet while each one is perfectly happy in his sphere, and according to his capacity, there will be great diversity of gifts, of powers, and of attainments. "As one star differeth from another star in glory," yet each one shineth with an effulgence that is perfect in itself, and peculiar to itself, and is, within itself, an essential entity in God's great plan

of the universe; so shall each one of God's children, who is true to himself, "stand in his lot," and fill his place, and be a significant factor in that great Spiritual Firmament, that shall shine forever and ever around the Great White Throne.

What, then, shall we conclude in regard to those who have lived under a cloud of heathen darkness, shut out from the light and the benign influences of Divine Revelation, and yet have delighted to trace the finger of God in His handiwork, who have sought to know the truth, and have loved the right for its own sake—for its intrinsic excellence *per se*? Surely their reward will be proportionate to their zeal for the right, and their works of helpfulness, mercy and love for their fellow men. Those who, in the absence of a surer light, have found their highest enjoyment in "looking through nature up to nature's God," will surely, in that higher sphere, be permitted "to see Him as He is," and to dwell in that life-giving light that emanates from

His throne, so full and free. And doubtless many will thus come up from out of the shadows of ignorance and superstition as bright jewels for the Master's crown, and put to shame those who might have walked in the fulness of the light, but who, through indifference to their own higher interests, "have neglected so great salvation," or have actually "loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." "The people of Nineveh shall rise up in judgment with this generation and shall condemn it," says Christ; "for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold a greater than Jonah is here."

How great, then, is our responsibility, and how exemplary should be our lives, who walk in the noonday light of the Gospel Dispensation! "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us; looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that

was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the Throne of God." And, like Moses, the servant of God, let us "have respect unto the recompense of reward."

CHAPTER XI

Plenty in Heaven



SINCE the day that Adam through transgression was driven out of the beautiful garden of Eden, since from the High Chancery of Heaven went forth the stern and irrevocable decree, "IN THE SWEAT OF THY FACE SHALT THOU EAT BREAD," and the very earth was through man's disobedience CURSED, so that it brought forth "THORNS AND THISTLES," since down from the Shining Courts of Day came, as on the wings of the wind, the Messenger of God's Wrath, and speeding, with breathless haste and tearful eye, to the scene of man's great catastrophe, placed round about the Tree of Life a turning flaming sword; since that sad, *sad* day, since that dark eventful hour, how great has been the sufferings of untold thousands of the human race through famine, poverty

and destitution! How many homes where comfort, peace and gladness might have prevailed, have become the scenes of sorrow and sadness; because the 'gaunt wolf' has entered at the door! How many a "mother of helpless and depending children with no living friend in all the wide world to whom she might appeal for succor" has wrung her hands in bitterest anguish, while her little ones have begged in vain for bread! And how many a helpless and unfortunate waif with neither father, nor mother, nor sympathizing friend, unheeded by the busy and thoughtless throng, and scorned by the haughty and proud, has been permitted to actually starve, or freeze to death on the streets of our great cities! The full extent of the misery, the depth of the destitution, and wretchedness, and woe that abound in the sparsely settled and famine-swept regions of the West, and in the over populous cities of the East, Eternity alone shall reveal. But why contemplate these dark scenes? Why sympathize with these unfortunate way-

farers? Because they are our brothers and our sisters, our Heavenly Father's own dear children, and equally as precious in His sight as the more fortunate and prosperous ones. Why then, you ask, does He permit them thus to suffer? If He is a God of Mercy and Love, why does He allow sorrow and suffering to befall any of His children? And we answer, the sorrows and sufferings, the woes and misfortunes of life—as we term them—are not usually ministrations of wrath, but really blessings in disguise, agencies in the hand of a beneficent Heavenly Father to lead us to a higher, a purer, a nobler life. But Glory be to God for the promise of a land, a state, a condition, where no such discipline is needful, a land where want and woe shall never enter, a land where plenty abounds, *not alone for the few, but* FOR EVERY ONE. How rich indeed will be the inheritance, how blessed the estate of the saints in that Glory Land, where “He that sitteth on the Throne shall dwell among them, and they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any

more; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the Throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto Living Fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes"! Can you imagine what that never-ending feast will be like, when the Lamb which is in the midst of the Throne, the Atoning Lamb of Calvary, the Risen Lamb of Emmaus, the Ascended Lamb of Olivet, the Incarnate Son of God, the Reigning Prince of Heaven, shall condescend to minister to His ransomed, blood-bought saints in Glory, shall feed them on Heavenly Manna, and shall lead them over plains Elysian, through pastures Green beneath waving pensile boughs, laden with healing leaves and luscious fruits, and beside flowing fountains of Living Waters? Little matters it then whether the path of our earthly pilgrimage lies in shadow or in sheen, if only we are true to our spiritual interests. Little matters it if we hunger and thirst here, if only like Moses we "choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to be

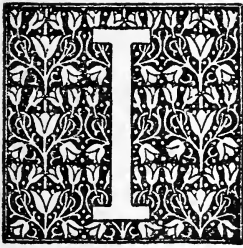
called the son of Pharaoh's daughter"; for we shall, *by and by* partake of the rich bounties of Heaven, and BE SATISFIED; WHEN WE SHALL "AWAKE IN HIS LIKENESS."

"Yes, *by and by* will soon be NOW,
And God shall wipe each tear-stained brow;
The Lamb shall feed them from the Throne,
To Living Waters lead His own."

"Impatient soul, and murmuring heart,
Your murmuring cease and bear your part
Of pain and labor on life's road,
For soon 'twill lead thee to thy God."

CHAPTER XII

The Language of Heaven



T is an established principle of Comparative Philology that the number and variety of words in the vocabulary of any people, and the accuracy, precision and nicety of adaptation of those words to the expression of delicate and discriminative shades of thought, feeling and purpose are an infallible and unequivocal index to the stage of civilization and refinement attained by that people. Man starts in infancy on a career that is immortal without the knowledge of a single word by which to express even his simplest and most rudimentary wants. His first language is a cry or a groan in no way superior to what might be uttered by any of the lower orders of nature. But by and by his mind begins to expand, and that principle within him

which is allied to the Divine begins to manifest itself, and he gradually and almost unconsciously adopts the use of a few simple words to express his crude ideas. This is but the incipient stage of one of those God-given powers with which man is endowed, and which may be indefinitely yea infinitely developed. And so as man's field of knowledge broadens, and his ideas become more and more numerous and complex, he constantly finds need of new words, wherewith to clothe respectably the new concepts begotten by the activities of his own mind. Thus of his own progress in knowledge is born the necessity of a more extensive vocabulary, and of a language of greater versatility and flexibility. How insufficient the vocabulary, how inadequate the phraseology of the unlettered rustic would be for the use of the learned philosopher, or commentator, or the writer of a metaphysical discussion! And much more insufficient and inappropriate for the use of the Ransomed Hosts of Heaven would be the most elegant and refined, the most learned,

erudite and classic, the most euphonious and mellifluous, the most profound and sublime or the most tender and reverential language ever spoken or conceived by mortal man. What then, you ask, will be the language of Heaven? We do not know. *We can not know.* It could not now be revealed unto us—except our capacities were enlarged—for it is beyond the scope of our comprehension. It will transcend, excel and tower above the limitations and imperfections of the languages of earth, just as the knowledge and capacity of the Glorified Immortals transcend that of man in his present state. Enough for us to know, it will be a language fully adapted to the expression of all that is grand and good, noble and sublime. It will be the language of love: no harsh words will mar its beauty. It will be the language of worship: no profane or irreverent terms will tarnish its purity. It will be the language of truth: no falsehood will ever disgrace it. It will be the language of innocence and unselfishness: no foul gossip will ever pollute it.

It will be a language of peace and joy and gladness. It will be a general, a uniform language. On the plains of Heaven, no Tower of Babel will ever be built. No confusion of tongues will there exist. As on the day of Pentecost every man heard in his own tongue, notwithstanding the disciples of Christ spoke but one language, so in that great day every man will be able to hear and speak and comprehend in one language the mysteries and glories of that immortal state.

CHAPTER XIII

The Society of Heaven



IN this present life "*the wheat*" and "*the tares*" must grow together. Those who desire above all else to keep themselves "unspotted from the world," and to "abstain from all appearance of evil" must often from necessity come into daily contact with the foul and the vicious, must commingle with, and be surrounded by, "that baser sort of fellows" who carry with them, wherever they go, an atmosphere polluted with profanity and moral malaria, and pregnant with the germs of dissolution and spiritual death. And from this cause as much as from any other, springs the necessity of a watchfulness so untiring, a vigilance so unceasing, on the part of those who would "overcome the world," and "escape the snares of the wicked one."

We are morally amenable for the society we keep, in just so far as that society is a matter of selection and choice—or of culpable indifference—on our own part; and so well is this understood that it has passed into a proverb: “Tell me the company you keep, and I will tell you who you are.”

Sometimes, however, it becomes the duty of the Christian to seek the society of the vicious, that he may be the means of imparting to them that spiritual leaven which shall, under God, work out their moral renovation. But to the faithful child of God, who goes *thus* on a mission of mercy and love, the danger of infection and contamination is much less than to others; because he goes in the power of the Holy Spirit, “having his feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace.” Yet every experienced Christian knows how much more difficult it is to preserve an immaculate life, when surrounded by the emissaries of Satan, than when associated with those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Our advance-

ment in the Divine Life often depends very largely upon our environments. This is not, however, as it should be ; a child of God should not be so much "a creature of circumstances," but such is the weakness, and such the imperfection of human nature, especially in childhood ; and this fact we are expected to recognize ; for we are taught to pray, "Lead us not into temptation."

In selecting a location for a home there is, therefore, to the thoughtful person, no more important question to be decided than this: What is the society of the place—what is the status, moral and intellectual, of those by whom I am to be surrounded, and with whom I, and my family, must associate?

Even in the best society that it is possible to find on earth how much there is of influence that is not salutary, how much of weakness and human imperfection, if not of overt and aggressive evil. Our adversary, the devil, is abroad in the land, "going to and fro, seeking whom he may devour," not always "as a roaring lion" seeking to terrify, but frequent-

ly as an insidious and circumventive foe, laying snares to entrap us, where least expected. No spot on earth is secure from the intrusion of sin, or from invasion by the allied armies of the powers of darkness.

But will it always be thus? Will the seducing influences of sin forever abide, and Satan continue to deceive the nations, and to devise pitfalls for the feet of the unwary? No, "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory," we have the assurance of "A NEW HEAVEN and A NEW EARTH, wherein dwelleth RIGHTEOUSNESS." "For unto us a CHILD is born, unto us a SON is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called WONDERFUL, COUNSELOR, THE MIGHTY GOD, THE EVERLASTING FATHER, THE PRINCE OF PEACE." "And of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end." "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called THE WAY OF HOLINESS." "The unclean shall not pass over it." "No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall

not be found there, but the REDEEMED shall walk there, and the RANSOMED OF THE LORD shall return and come to ZION with SONGS AND EVERLASTING JOY upon their heads: they shall obtain JOY AND GLADNESS, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

Yes, when we meet around the Great White Throne, and walk the Gold-paved Streets, we shall be forever free from the dominion of sin, forever beyond the allurements, illusions and vexations of ungodly associations. We will there hold sweet converse with Moses and Elias, with Enoch who "walked with God and was not [on earth]; for God took him [to Heaven]," with the patriarchs and prophets of old, with the apostles and martyrs of more modern times, with the noble, the true and the good of every age, and every clime, with that *innumerable company* who "have washed their robes and *made them white* in the blood of the Lamb," with "the spirits of just men made perfect," and with the angels of God, who have kept their first high and holy estate.

With all of these *Sanctified, Glorified* and *Beatified* beings for our intimate associates and companions, and with the immediate presence of Christ our Saviour, seated upon the Throne of His Infinite Glory, crowned King of kings and Lord of lords, what more congenial companionship could the soul of man desire? What more perfect provision for happiness, for joy without measure, for felicity inexpressible can the mind of man conceive? Could we but visit the Glory Land and enjoy its associations for a single day, how highly would we prize the privilege, and how very swiftly would those precious moments seem to fly! How greatly the enjoyments of our fondest earthly associations are curtailed by the intrusive thought that we *so very soon* must part! And O how very much the enjoyment of that Heavenly companionship will be heightened and intensified by the fact that in that HAPPY HOME no separations will be necessary, and that sad, *sad* word GOOD-BYE need never more be said!

CHAPTER XIV

The Harmony of Heaven



HERE discord, division and dissension exist no real peace, no lasting enjoyment is possible. No stringed instrument can give forth sweet, tender, touching strains of music, unless its chords vibrate in perfect harmony. No human soul whose powers, inclinations and propensities, varied though they be, have not been tuned and set in order by the Master Musician of the universe, and trained, by careful discipline, to act in unison under the magical sway of the Divine Spirit's quickening touch can sound over the waves of life's tempestuous sea that sublime note of harmony, which shall be as oil cast on the troubled wave,—harmony with the eternal law of fitness, harmony with self, harmony with God and all God's approved creatures. "Every kingdom divided against

itself," says Christ, "is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand." Hence we see that *harmony is everything*, both to the individual, and to organizations or corporate bodies; and that the want of it invariably brings disaster and failure. But shall perfect harmony ever be attained by mortals? If so, when, and how? And whence came these disturbing influences which so often mar our happiness, and blight our fairest prospects of peace? To tell whence they came is no difficult task; for are they not all the fruitage, either direct or indirect, of sin, the result of man's disobedience and fall? From selfishness and envy spring contentions, quarrels and divisions, these are the *direct* fruits of sin. But a very large proportion of the discord and want of harmony existing among those who are striving to "overcome the world" and to live a better life is due to a misapprehension of each others motives, and hence is only an *indirect* result of sin. Our knowledge being imperfect, our temperaments, our training

and our inherent powers of comprehension different, it is very natural that the decisions of our judgment and the dictates of our consciences should in many instances be diverse, and sometimes even conflictive. Hence we are sometimes led to regard as a moral offence that which was meant by a conscientious brother or sister as an act of absolute moral rectitude; and in thus failing to make due allowance for the difference in appearance of things when seen through different media, or from different points of perspective, we often judge each other wrongfully. But in the clearer light and knowledge, the perfect purity, the abounding charity, the all-embracing love of Heaven, how different! Where the highest aspiration, yea the most profound and absorbing passion, of every soul is to glorify God, where that amazing love that induced the Immaculate Son of God to give His life a ransom for us, is reproduced in the hearts of His redeemed Sons and Daughters, who are already "made partakers of the Divine Nature," what harmony, what unity,

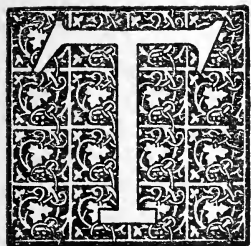
what perfect tranquillity, what unalloyed and unbounded peace will prevail!

While God's children may never attain, and need not expect perfect similarity of mind, perfect accord of thought, desire and purpose in this life, yet it should be our constant endeavor, as children of *one* Divine Father, co-heirs of *one* Heavenly Heritage, to grow up into that perfect unity that becometh the Sons of God; for the command is, "Be ye therefore PERFECT, even as your Father which is in Heaven is PERFECT."

In Heaven alone, where no sin is found,
There will perfect harmony abound.

CHAPTER XV

Traveling in Heaven



HERE will be no plodding with weary feet along the bright golden street. There will be no waiting for the street car that we may take a ride. On the spacious avenues of Heaven no such nuisance as a rumbling car will be known. No necessity for such a thing will exist. No law of gravitation will bind our imponderous spirits down, or retard the agility and celerity of our movements, but we shall mount up, like an aspiration, and by mere volition, upon the afflatus of our own ecstasy, and like a bright beam of the morning sunlight, float and soar in the empyreal ether of Heaven, with an ease, grace and rapidity unknown even to the humming-bird. We shall bask in the cerulean light and balmy zephyrs that breathe sweet music in cadences mild among the healing leaves and pensile boughs of Life's

Fair Tree, or skim swallow-like over the surface of the River of Life or the Crystal Sea of Glass, while our hearts pulsate in harmony to the rhythmic flow of the Glad Redemption Song. There will be no clatter of noisy wheels, no tread of hurrying feet, nor yet hum of multitudinous wings as the Ransomed Army of the Lord sweep in glad triumph along the bright Arcades of Heaven, through the Pearly Gates, or over the illimitable Elysian Fields of light. But noiselessly as moves the genial sunlight on a bright spring morning, when first mounts the King of Day above the eastern horizon, so will move that mighty throng, save that, ever and anon, loud hosannas, glad shouts of triumph, sweet strains of music will break forth from myriads of tongues harmonious and make Heaven's welkin dome to ring.

(1.) "A sudden blaze of song

Spreads o'er the expanse of Heaven,
In waves of light it thrills along

The angelic signal given:
Glory to God! from yonder central fire
Flows out the echoing beyond the starry choir.

- (2.) "Like circles, widening round
Upon a clear blue river,
Orb after orb the wondrous sound
Is echoed on forever:
Glory to God on high! on earth be peace,
And love toward men of love, salvation and release.'

CHAPTER XVI

The Permanence of Heaven



TIME is a measured portion of duration, a kingdom whose extent and confines are concealed from mortal vision, but whose bounds and limitations are clearly prescribed on the records of the Omniscient, a kingdom presided over by a relentless and arbitrary despot whose name is CHANGE, whose absolute fiat can neither be evaded nor revoked. In all the vast realm of time there is nothing abiding or permanent. Wherever Construction goes Destruction follows. Constructive genius and assiduous toil may rear magnificent palaces, and where erst the rude wigwam stood, under the hand of labor and art, beautiful cities may spring into existence, as if by magic. But, alas, how very soon the whirlwind's wrath, the earthquake's shock or the hissing flame's mad fury

may wipe them from the face of the earth. The most enduring material monument man can construct to commemorate his greatness (?) or to mark his final resting place will gradually yield to the same inevitable law of change. The solid marble will crumble back to dust. "The granite rocks disorganize to feed the hungry moss they bear." Nor is this all; the law of change is no less applicable to man himself than to the work of his hands. Every son and daughter of Adam's race is born a subject (*nolens volens*) of this inexorable potentate. He comes into this world an innocent and helpless babe. He reclines on a fond mother's breast in safety and perfect peace, and what happiness, what immunity from sorrow and care are his! But he cannot remain in this stage. He cannot tarry amid these pleasant environments. CHANGE is written on every fibre and tissue of his physical being, and as the days are multiplied into weeks and months and years, its work becomes manifest. He is borne along on the ceaseless tide of years, through child-

hood's checkered scenes, and varied experiences, to manhood's or womanhood's proud and hopeful maturity; and so he stands at last on the summit of physical perfection, and looks out with high anticipations upon the broad avenues of human enterprise and activity. Could he, like Joshua of old, command the sun to stand still, could he but remain for a thousand years on that summit, how much he might accomplish, what knowledge acquire, what enviable heights attain! But he is still in the realm of mutability. The very earth on which he stands is moving and changing. He can find no foothold on which he may stand still. No, not even long enough to retrospect the devious path already trodden, or to outline his future course. His progress up the hill of life has been a very rapid one, so much so that we hear him comparing it to a race. But when he has passed the summit and begins to descend the western slope will he travel more slowly, will more leisure be granted him? Nay, verily, but as he advances his speed seems rather to accel-

erate, and he is hurried on through life, past its privileges, past its opportunities, past coveted treasures, past anticipated attainments, until he stands at last on the verge of the grave comparatively empty-handed and destitute.

Or what signifies it, if, in the rapid race of life, he may perchance have hoarded wealth, or won renown? These will not stay the hand of death, or bridge the river over which he must pass. And when the boatman calls for him, whom shall he recognize but the tyrant CHANGE, still grim-visaged and stern, but more welcome now, perhaps, than ever before; for the passage of the river is the final transition from the "Kingdom of Matter" where Change reigns supreme, to the "Kingdom of Spirit," where death and decay are swallowed up by victory, and Immortality forever reigns. To the child of God this simply means *going* HOME: "For we know that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the

heavens." Our Saviour says, "In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." "The world *passeth away*, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God *abideth forever*." "And this is the promise that He hath given us, even ETERNAL LIFE." "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and *that fadeth not away*, reserved in Heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." "And when the CHIEF SHEPHERD shall appear, ye shall receive a CROWN OF GLORY *that fadeth not away*." "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother,

or wife, or children, or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit EVERLASTING LIFE." Many more such passages might be cited. God's Word abounds in promises which give assurance of the permanence and durability of the state of future blessedness. With what significance are these "exceeding great and precious promises" fraught! How much of solid comfort, of real substantial enjoyment, they bring to every loyal, trusting child of God! What a blessed assurance is ours, that when this fleeting life is over, we shall enter upon a life of never-ending felicity, and wear a crown of never-fading glory, if only we faint not by the way. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His Holy Name!"

CHAPTER XVII

Alleluia, or Worship in Heaven



NATURALLY and intuitively does every man born into the world with normal intellectual powers, realize the fact of the existence of a power that is superhuman and supernatural. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God"; but not from lack of evidence to the contrary hath he said it, nor from inability to comprehend the unmistakable teachings of nature, but from the perversity and willful obstinacy of his nature. So forcibly does intuition speak to man of a Superior Power, a higher intelligence, and urge him on to acts of homage and adoration that, in the absence of any definite knowledge of the true nature or attributes of this "Great Spirit," man almost invariably worships some material object,—not generally as God,—but more commonly as an im-

personation or symbol of God; for he is very sure that God exists. As a creature of worship was man made. Adoration, and homage, and song, and prayer and praise are essential parts of his native element, and without them he can not be happy. And it is not a matter of chance that such employments are conducive to the highest happiness of man, but it arises from the fact, and is an evidence of the fact, that these things lie along the line of the activities for which man's powers were created and designed.

As the grandest theme that can engage the mind of any finite creature is the majesty, the grandeur, the glory of the Infinite Creator, and the most tender and pathetic, and at the same time the most thrilling and sublime emotions that can move the sensibilities of a ransomed mortal, a redeemed soul, are those emotions that arise when we contemplate the grand scheme of Redeeming Love, so the sublimest language known to man is employed in God's Word to portray to our conception some faint idea of the grand outbursts and

overflowings of those profound and all-absorbing emotions of reverence and adoration, of praise and of thanksgiving that will engage our souls as we stand before the Throne of Omnipotence, and with enraptured gaze look upon OUR SAVIOUR *and* OUR KING, and as we with all the earnestness and intensity of our new-born powers ascribe HONOR *and* POWER, *and* GLORY *and* DOMINION, forever and ever, "Unto Him who loved us, and hath washed us from our sins in His own precious blood," who hath ransomed and redeemed us from under the curse of the law, to be kings and priests unto God. So, "That disciple whom Jesus loved," and who was doubtless best fitted to be Revelator of the hidden mysteries and the ineffable glories of the Celestial City, in his attempt to describe the worship of Heaven, breaks forth in language than which no sublimer was ever penned, language which stands, to-day, as a model *par excellence* of all that is grand and sublime and noble in the speech of mortals. Indeed it seems very probable that that one sweetly solemn and sacred

word, "*Alleluia*" so frequently recurring in this connection, so conspicuously wanting elsewhere, and so peculiarly and richly fraught with the very genius of the Land of Glorified Immortals, is a veritable fragment of the language of Heaven. We are told that the word comes to us direct from the original Hebrew, but that fact only heightens the probability that it is a gem to mortals lent from Heaven's own vocabulary. Be that as it may, the word is within itself a rich treasure. "*Alleluia*," means PRAISE YE THE LORD. How significant! How richly comprehensive! It embraces the whole purpose of man's creation; viz., the honor and glory of the Creator. But let us read that inimitable description, "And let him that readeth understand."

"I heard a great voice of much people in Heaven, saying, ALLELUIA; SALVATION, and GLORY, and HONOR, and POWER unto THE LORD, OUR GOD: for TRUE and RIGHTEOUS are His judgments." "And again they said, ALLELUIA, and the four-and-twenty elders

and the four beasts fell down and worshiped God, who sat on the Throne, saying, AMEN; ALLELUIA, and a voice came out of the Throne saying, PRAISE OUR GOD, all ye His servants and ye that fear Him, both small and great.” “And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, ALLELUIA; FOR THE LORD GOD OMNIPOTENT REIGNETH.” “Let us be glad and rejoice and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the LAMB is come, and His wife hath made herself ready.” “And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and [I saw] them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God, and they sing THE SONG OF MOSES, the servant of God, and THE SONG OF THE LAMB, saying:

“Great and Marvelous Are Thy Works,
Lord God Almighty.
Just and True Are Thy Ways
Thou King of Saints.”

“And I beheld and heard the voice of many

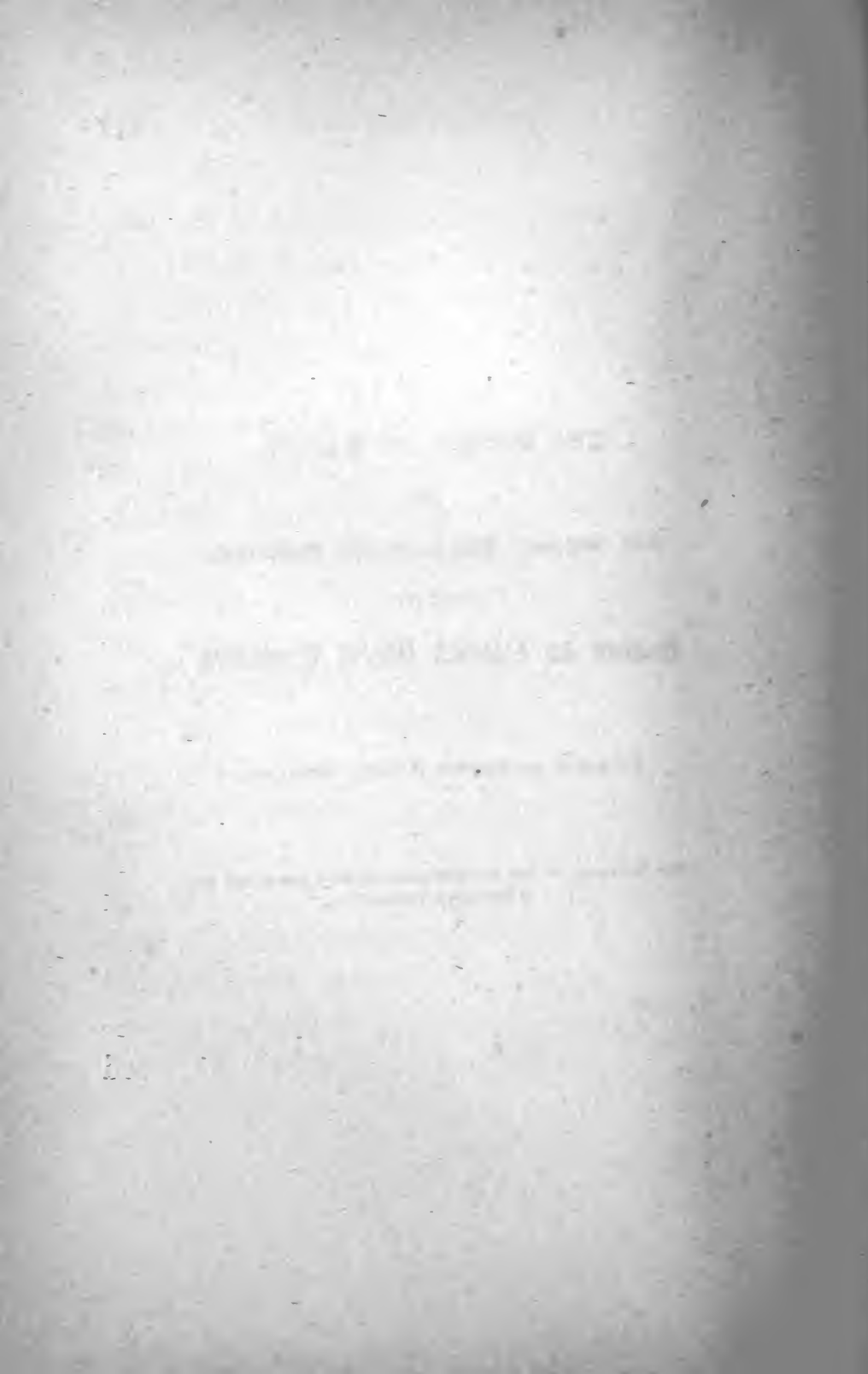
angels round about the Throne, and the beasts and the elders—and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands—saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive POWER, *and* RICHES, *and* WISDOM, *and* STRENGTH, *and* HONOR, *and* GLORY, *and* BLESSING.” “And every creature which is in Heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, heard I, saying, BLESSING, *and* HONOR, *and* GLORY, *and* POWER, be unto HIM that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the LAMB forever and for ever.”

Did you ever think how much the devotional spirit that dwells within you is strengthened, intensified and confirmed by hallowed associations and surroundings? How much easier, pleasanter, more satisfactory and unrestrained is worship when in God's house surrounded by congenial and devout spirits, than when in the busy marts of worldly ambition, where greed and avarice dwell, or among the gay and thoughtless

throng of youthful pleasure-seekers, or worse still, among the inveterate scoffers, who point the finger of scorn and derision at him who acknowledges any power or being superior to himself! And did you ever think, if permitted to join that adoring throng of angels and elders whose voices the Revelator heard, at one time, more than a hundred millions strong, and that ransomed host from earth "whom no man can number," crying, ALLELUIA, AMEN, HOSANNA TO CHRIST, OUR KING! how the spark of devotion, now so nearly dormant in your breast, will be fanned into a flame of holy fervor, and how your love, so feeble and faltering now, for Him who once wore the "crown of thorns," for your sake, but now wears a Crown of Victory, will grow into an all-absorbing and irrepressible zeal, a holy enthusiasm that knows no bound?

And did you ever think how your love for Christ and His cause, your appreciation of things sacred, your "JOY IN THE HOLY GHOST," and all things else that pertain to your Spir-

itual Life grow, expand, unfold and develop under the benign influence of the few brief seasons of prayer, communion and devotion enjoyed in this life? And have you, while rejoicing in the richness of the blessings thus vouchsafed to you by these brief "times of refreshing," endeavored to compare the meager opportunities of these earthly convocations with the infinitely greater and more glorious facilities of spiritual growth which Heaven itself will afford? And have you tried to conceive the sublime heights of spiritual excellence and glory Divine that will then be easily accessible to you, when you shall hear the Master's voice loving, tenderly calling, "Come Up Higher," and when with His own gentle Hand, bearing still the marks of the cruel cross, He shall lead forth His Ransomed Host o'er Fields Elysian, and point out the Shining Way to Glories Supernal and Sempiternal, crying, "Still Onward and upward?"



The Glories of Heaven

OR

The Blessed Estate of the Redeemed

PART II

... Heaven an Exalted Moral Condition ...

——::——

“For behold the kingdom of God is within you.”

——::——

**“The kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy
in the Holy Ghost.”**

THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

BY SAMUEL JOHNSON

IN TWO VOLUMES

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Vol. I.

CHAP. I.

CHARLES THE FIRST, KING OF GREAT BRITAIN, &c.

IN THE YEAR 1625.

THE FIRST OF JULY.

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Heaven an Exalted Moral Condition

CHAPTER I

General Remarks



IN the preceding chapters we have confined ourselves almost exclusively to a contemplation of Heaven in a material sense —Heaven Considered as a Local Habitation—Heaven as a city that hath foundations, whose Maker and Builder is God.” And for so considering it, we have ample warrant in God’s own inspired and revealed Truth; and if any apology is necessary for presenting the material view of the subject first, suffice it to say, such is the natural order of the development of the idea of Heaven in the human mind; and only by degrees does the Great Teacher lead us up through, and by means of, the material and the concrete, to that stage where our intelligence can grasp and comprehend the import of abstract

spiritual Truth. And never, perhaps, in this life shall we be able to form a just conception of the great and mysterious change that shall be wrought in us by Power Divine, when that which has been "sown in corruption shall be raised in incorruption," or to understand just how far the material and physical natures with which we are now endowed shall be submerged in, or superseded by, that which is immaterial and spiritual. We know that Christ, the Resurrection and the Life, "the First Fruits of them that slept," was raised from the dead with a body apparently material, and yet able to vanish, like a spirit, from the vision of man; and "We know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him." Glorious transformation! Wonderful, wonderful work of Infinite Power and Wisdom!

In many ways are we taught in God's Word that man in his present state is unable and unworthy to look upon God as He is, and incompetent to understand, directly and without the aid of similitudes, or parables, the

deep mysteries that appertain to His kingdom. Moses could not look upon God, face to face, but was only permitted to behold His glory in the semblance of a bush that burned with fire and yet was not consumed. He was not even allowed to draw nigh to the sacred spot, where God thus revealed His immediate presence; and yet he was afterward permitted to go up into Mount Sinai and thereto commune, in some mysterious manner, with God, while Israel's hosts stood in the valley, and were forbidden to come nigh that thunder-shaken and cloud-enveloped mountain, lest they die. Christ declares to His disciples, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye can not bear them now." "And with parables spake He the word unto them, as they were able to hear." Paul says to the Corinthians, "I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able." So we may certainly infer that many, at least, of the material representations of Heaven, given in the Holy Scriptures, are

rather beautiful metaphors, sublime allegories, designed to convey to our immature and finite minds some faint conception of a glory and excellence which we cannot now otherwise comprehend, rather dim portrayals of glories supernal that shall dawn upon our enraptured vision, when at last we shall awake to a glorious immortality, rather than literal descriptions of material realities. Grand and glorious indeed are the conceptions we form, and sublime, ineffably sublime, the visions of glory that rise in an effulgence of living light upon our enraptured gaze as we, by an eye of faith, or through the medium of Inspired Revelation, contemplate the exceeding loveliness of the Celestial City as a material abiding place, prepared as a perpetual home for all the pure and the good, a home of "Many Mansions," a city of endless day, illumined by a radiance of holiness immaculate and dazzling purity emanating from the Throne of God and the atoning Lamb, gladdened by the placid and pacific waters of Life's constantly flowing River.

But when we remember that all these are but a feeble comparison to the great realities of Heaven, that in the highest and truest sense *Heaven is an exalted moral condition*, depending neither on *time*, nor *place*, nor *material environments*, that to be an heir of Heaven is to be in perfect harmony with Heaven's Great King; yea, and more, to be a "*partaker of the Divine Nature*"; and "to put on Christ" is to become identified with and initiated into the nature of God's own Son, who said, "I am Alpha and Omega, The Beginning and the End"; what then shall our ideal of Heaven and its glories be? Where then shall language be found to convey an adequate conception of the exceeding riches of God's great "Recompense of Reward?" How transcendently glorious, how inexpressibly sublime must be the realities of that state of moral purity, of perfect holiness, of superabounding and all-embracing love, to which such glorious metaphors are but mute indices to point out the resplendent and ever-brightening way; and

of which the rare and rich allegories of the Sacred Oracles are but a mere prelude, or a faint glimmer as of an Oriental aurora, heralding the rising light of an *Eternal Day!*

Hitherto we have not asked or answered the question, *Where is Heaven?* Nor are we yet prepared to do so until we shall have more fully considered the question, *What is Heaven?* Paul, the apostle, tells us that he "knew a man caught up to the *Third Heaven.*" This declaration implies the existence of a *First*, and a *Second* Heaven; and naturally gives rise to the questions, *How many Heavens are there?* and *What are they?* We cannot answer positively. But let us see what inferences we may reasonably draw from the teachings of Divine Revelation on this very interesting theme. In connection with the passage just quoted (from the 12th chapter of 2 Corinthians), Paul speaks of the *Third Heaven* as *Paradise*. And Christ said to the penitent thief on the Cross, "To-day shalt thou be with Me *in Paradise*"; but to Mary He said, after His resurrection,

“Touch Me not: for I have not yet ascended to My Father.” From these and other Scriptures of like import, it seems to me that we may justly infer that *Paradise*, or the *Third Heaven*, is the state, or condition, occupied by Christ while His body lay in the sepulcher—the state now occupied by millions of disembodied saints who are waiting for the dawn of a glorious Resurrection Morn to give them victory over the power of death. Then it follows that since this state termed *Paradise*, which lies just beyond the Jordan,—just within the Land of the Immortals,—is the *Third Heaven*, there must be—somewhere—sometime within the confines of this mortal life, two distinct stages, or conditions, of moral status, termed respectively, THE FIRST, and THE SECOND HEAVEN.

Then since there are TWO HEAVENS on earth to mortals given, or since mortal life embraces *two stages* of Heaven, let us consider what they are. Heaven is Innocency, Simplicity, Purity Immaculate and Love Unfeigned. If then, thou wouldst find

Heaven, look first upon the little child, as it lies upon its mother's breast, fit emblem of all that is best in humanity, and say if this is not indeed the FIRST HEAVEN to mortals given. No sin has defiled the temple made for the indwelling of God's Holy Spirit. No consciousness of guilt clouds its waking hours, or mars its sweet dreams of peace. No vexing cares destroy its mirthful glee. No chains of evil habit bind its free and happy spirit. O blessed state of innocence and love! O rich inheritance of purity and peace! Hear what the Master saith of the blessedness of childhood: "And Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, 'Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.' 'Whosoever, therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same *is greatest* in the Kingdom of Heaven.' 'And whosoever shall receive one such little child in My Name receiveth Me; but whosoever shall offend one of these

little ones, which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in Heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father, who is in Heaven."

But alas, how very soon the little feet usually forsake "the tender Shepherd's peaceful fold," and wander away on "the barren mountains of sin and folly"! The spotless purity and innocence of childhood, how evanescent! The precious, balmy, morning hours of life, how fleeting, alas, they are! This Universal Heaven, this Eden of Primitive Purity, where in the cool of the day Divinity walks and communes with humanity, how soon, alas, is forfeited by sin and lost! But, "The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost." O amazing love! O matchless grace Divine! "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not

perish, but have EVERLASTING LIFE." "O Praise ye the Lord; for He is good: for His mercy endureth forever," "And His loving-kindness unto all generations."

No sooner have the little ones forsaken the FIRST HEAVEN, the innocence of childhood, than the gentle voice of the tender Shepherd, the compassionate and sympathizing Jesus, is heard calling them, and saying, "Seek ye the Lord, while He may be found, call ye upon Him, while he is near." "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price." "For thus saith the Lord, ye have sold yourselves for naught, and ye shall be redeemed without money." "Incline your ear, and come unto Me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure

mercies of David." "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. In righteousness shalt thou be established."

CHAPTER II

The Second Heaven, or Salvation by Free Grace

*"By Grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves:
it is the gift of God."*



WHEN through disobedience sin entered the world, and death became by sin the inevitable heritage of every son and daughter of Adam's race, then was man's fate truly a *sealed book*, and no way was apparent whereby he might escape the awful penalties(?)—nay, not penalties, but rather necessary consequences—which, as a natural result, grew out of his wilful violation of the Divine command. Man in his primitive state held rank but "a little lower than the angels," and was "crowned with glory and honor." He had been created in the image and likeness of his Maker, in that he was made upright in heart, and pure

in purpose; and yet, in the exercise of that free moral agency with which he was endowed, he had fallen from that high and holy estate. Fallen! *Fallen!* FALLEN! How sad the news that rang, on that fatal day, even through the courts of Heaven! How piteous the wail of grief and woe that went up from that once happy pair, when they began to realize the enormity of sin, and the awful consequences involved! How deep the gloom of apprehension, how dark the night of despair that settled over that garden, where erst the sun had shone so bright, the birds had sung so sweet, and everything had been so merry, glad and gay! Man, the highest intelligence of Earth, having fallen, the lower orders of creation were involved to some extent, and the very earth was cursed for man's sake. Terrible indeed are the effects of sin! And awful was the dilemma into which man had fallen! His sun had gone down in darkness behind that irrevocable decree, "*In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die;*" and no STAR OF HOPE had risen on the plains

of Bethlehem to point to the resurrection morn. The great sympathetic Infinite Spirit was grieved that He had made man; and He at once set about devising a plan for man's extrication and restoration. Then it was that in the council of Heaven was instituted the inquiry, "Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?" And search was made, it seems, in Heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and yet no creature was found in all God's wide domains worthy to redeem man, or to open and look upon the book of his sealed and awful doom! But lo! Amazing Grace Divine! God's own Son, the second person of the adorable Trinity, takes upon Himself the burden of man's woe, and pledges His own stainless life, to redeem man from the power of sin and death! And a glad proclamation is issued from the Throne of the Omnipotent, saying, "BEHOLD, THE LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH, THE ROOT OF DAVID, HATH PREVAILED TO OPEN THE BOOK, AND TO LOOSE THE SEALS THEREOF." Thus were the gates of THE SECOND HEAVEN opened. And

the rich blessings of Salvation through Christ, which we as believers now enjoy, were first dimly revealed to our ancestors in the promise that, *The seed of the woman shall bruise the Serpent's head*. And from time to time was the light of hope caused to shine brighter and yet brighter, as the plan of human redemption, devised in the Divine Council, was more fully revealed unto successive generations, by prophecy, by types and shadows and various ceremonial rites; until, in the fulness of time, came the Great Antitype, the promised Messiah, in the person of the humble Babe of Bethlehem; and His mission of matchless love and boundless mercy was fulfilled, and human redemption consummated, when Christ in His dying agony said, "IT IS FINISHED."

But God did not take from man his free moral agency, or purchase for him an unconditional salvation. He looked in pity on man's ruined and hopeless condition, He saw him struggling in the bitter waters and boisterous waves of the dark and fathomless

sea of sin, driven by the the winds of evil passions, and fettered by the chains of inherited depravity, and in mercy He threw out to him the LIFE LINE. But it rests at last with man to say whether he will accept salvation on God's own terms, or go down beneath the turbid waves to a dark perdition. But you ask, What are God's terms? Christ says, "I am the WAY, the TRUTH, and the LIFE: no man cometh to the Father, but by Me." "He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me, shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him." "Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out." "I am the Bread of Life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst." "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word." "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." "Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established."

“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.” “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” “If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.” “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.” “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be BORN AGAIN, he can not see the Kingdom of God.” “Except a man BE BORN of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the Kingdom of God.” “He that believeth on the Son of God HATH THE WITNESS IN HIMSELF.” “And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is Truth.” “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch can not bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no

more can ye, except ye abide in Me." "Be ye therefore steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in Heaven." "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil."

How copious, how abundant, how complete and conclusive are the teachings of God's Word in regard to the way of Salvation! It is not our province to enter upon

controverted theological grounds; but rather to glean from the rich harvest fields of Divine Truth golden sheaves of instruction, comfort and inspiration. But in these days of "dead formalities," external displays, pompous and empty ceremonial religions,—if indeed we dare call them religions,—too great emphasis can not be laid on the necessity of EXPERIMENTAL AND PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY."

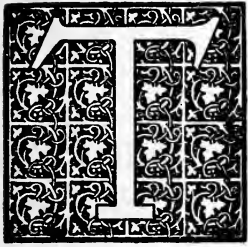
It is the privilege of every child of God, every one who has passed "from nature unto grace," to have "THE WITNESS WITHIN HIMSELF." For if our religion is genuine, "The Spirit Itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." Furthermore, if we are Christ's, and His Spirit dwelleth in us, we shall bring forth "the fruits of the Spirit": LOVE, JOY, PEACE, LONG-SUFFERING, GENTLENESS, GOODNESS, FAITH, MEEKNESS, TEMPERANCE. And if we are wise, and avail ourselves of the "high privileges of our calling in Christ Jesus," then shall we attain unto that grandeur of moral status,

that high vantage-ground of Christian character, where the spirit that was in Christ, our Master, shall be the all-potent power, the ever present talisman in our lives, leading us yet onward and upward with constantly increasing strength through delectable fields elysian.

In this, the dawn of the Twentieth Century, it is the high privilege, yea, the bounden duty of the Redeemed of the Lord to have their lives develop, through the exercise of the Christian Graces, into such a stage of PERSONAL HOLINESS and MUTUAL HELPFULNESS as will bring them into harmonious co-operation with the Divine Spirit, and thus make them efficient workers in the vineyard of the Master.

CHAPTER III

The Riches of His Grace, or Blessings by the Way.



RULY hath it been said, "We can not go to Heaven when we die unless we have Heaven in our hearts while we live." And while there is no such a thing possible for us as being passively "carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease," yet we rejoice to know that there is for us, in the Gospel plan, the sublime possibility, yea, the glorious privilege of rising exultingly and triumphantly on the wings of an active faith, into those higher realms of Holy Living, where bloom the amaranthine flowers of Trust and Peace and Love. We need not dream of being "borne on angel's wings to Abraham's bosom," unless we, like Abraham, are children of faith—a living, active faith that bringeth forth fruit to the honor and glory of God.

To go to Heaven is to attain to high moral status, to ascend from the plains of Kadesh-Barnea,—the valley of distrust and doubt and human weakness—up to Pisgah's glory-crowned summit, far above the clouds and mists that darken the path of those who walk in the valley; up where we may bask in the continual sunshine of a Savior's Love; where, instead of looking from beneath at the dark side of the clouds of adversity and trial and persecution and bereavement that we once so much feared, we may look out upon them from above, see more of their silver lining than of their ominous darkness, see them as God sees them, look upon them complacently; and trustingly and confidently sing, as sang the royal and saintly Psalmist of yore, "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of the isles be glad thereof:" sing as never lark sang, sing with an overflowing heart,

"Whate'er I do, where'er I be,
'Tis God's own Hand that leadeth me."

But as in the "Kingdom of Nature," so in

the "Kingdom of Grace," it is very easy to go down hill, but we cannot ascend without some effort; neither can we mount instantaneously from the low plains of human weakness and imperfection, up into the realms of perfect faith and trust and peace and love, into that blessed Land of Beulah, where Light Divine is ever shining, where Heavenly graces are ever blooming, and where each passing zephyr brings to our ears sweet notes of Heaven's melody.

"Heaven is not reached at a single bound,
But we build the ladder by which we rise
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
And we mount to the summit round by round."

The stately cedars on Lebanon's height, whose roots are firmly set in "the ancient rifted rock," are not the growth of a single day, but for many a long year they have stood in storm and sheen, and many wintry blasts have swept over their heads, and the rude winds beneath which they have often submissively bowed, and the hoary frosts, which Boreas hath showered upon them, have only given toughness and elasticity to their fibre.

Let this teach to our restless murmuring hearts a lesson of patience and trust. But while, like the cedars, we bow our heads that the storms may pass over us, we should be sustained by an abiding peace within: and such peace we may have, if only our feet are firmly planted on the Rock of Ages; if only we have "anchored our souls in the Haven of Rest."

"THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS RIGHTEOUSNESS and PEACE and JOY in the HOLY GHOST." Every government is founded and established on certain principles which constitute its distinctive features, and for the promotion and perpetuation of which its varied functions, and its numerous auxiliaries and agents, are all designed to co-operate. No government can be *great* or *good*—no matter how wisely planned or how skillfully executed its operations may be, or how pompous or imposing the display it makes—unless the principles on which it rests, and for which it stands are sound and philanthropic principles—principles calculated to enhance the well-being of its sub-

jects. The underlying principles then are the real entity, the life, the soul of the institution, while the visible parts, its organized forces, are only the machinery by and through which its operations are performed, and are no more entitled to be called the government than the physical body is to be called the man. And so when the Inspired Apostle speaks of the Kingdom of Heaven he means the grand fundamental principles of the Gospel of Christ, to establish which the Incarnate Son of God laid down His life, and for the promulgation and promotion of which the Church exists.

Let us consider, now, what these principles are. RIGHTEOUSNESS and PEACE and JOY in the HOLY GHOST. Certainly never was kingdom or empire founded on grander or more noble principles. Certainly no more worthy cause ever engaged the mind or enlisted the sympathy and co-operation of any created intelligence. My brother, my sister, are we loyal members of this great Kingdom, heirs of God and joint-heirs with His Son Jesus Christ?

If so, then must our lives be living exemplifications of the principles of which His Kingdom is the embodiment. **RIGHTEOUSNESS.** What is it? It implies, not only rightness of state or condition, justification, reconciliation, pardon for past offences; but also rightness of aim, purpose, aspiration; in short, *purity of heart, harmony with God*, a thoroughly *renewed* condition of the moral nature. Are our desires, our aspirations good? Are the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts acceptable in the sight of God? If so, then are we indeed children of God. And who can fathom the blessedness of that relationship? But if on the other hand we find in our hearts a desire for that which is not acceptable unto God, if our highest aspirations are for the vain and evanescent things of this present life, or if we give place to malice, envy or ill will, then we may be sure that we have "*moral heart-disease*," and need to go *at once* to the Great Physician for His healing, cleansing and renewing power. Have you, Dear Reader, been to Jesus for His cleansing

power? "Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?" If not, why not? (The fountain is free, and the invitation is urgent.) If so, are you keeping yourself "unspotted from the world?" Are you having a continual feast of spiritual gladness and sweet communion with the Blessed Master? Does He sup with you, and you with Him? Are you on the KING'S HIGHWAY OF HOLINESS? Are you counting all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ? *Are you GOING ON "from conquering to conquest and from victory unto FULL SALVATION?"* Have you within that fountain of Living waters, of which Christ spake to the woman of Samaria, "a well of water springing up unto EVERLASTING LIFE?" Can you say, with perfect assurance, "JESUS IS MINE, and I AM HIS?" Are you taking higher grounds in the DIVINE LIFE? Is your path growing brighter day by day? These are our blessed privileges through "Christ, who giveth us all things richly to enjoy." Take courage then, my brother; look up then my sister; and praise His Holy Name for the

blessed assurance, that "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." "Arise put on thy beautiful garments." He saith unto thee, "COME UP HIGHER."

But "THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS PEACE." "Peace that passeth understanding." "Peace that floweth as a river." But how floweth a river? Its origin is not usually in the shining valleys, but up among the rugged mountain crags, amid rough boulders, in the dismal shade of the deep dense forest. There rises the river, at first only a tiny stream, and merrily it sings, as it surmounts and overleaps the numerous obstacles that lie in its course. It pauses not, nor tarries, but gladly, constantly, onward it moves; and ever and anon as it glides along, come unheralded affluents from either side pouring in to augment its volume, to increase its power and importance, until at length its channel grows broad and deep, its surface becomes calm and smooth, and in sublime and majestic grandeur its mighty expanse of waters move

along, an irresistible, imperturbable power. Such is the flow of that sweet PEACE that comes to every loyal trusting SON and DAUGHTER of the GREAT KING. Have you this BLESSED PEACE? If not, then you are letting Satan, or some one else, cheat you out of your rightful heritage: for Christ hath said, "PEACE I leave with you, MY PEACE I give unto you." "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but *be of good cheer*: I have overcome the world."

But, "THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS JOY IN THE HOLY GHOST." You ask, What is that Joy, and how may I know whether or not I possess it? Ask yourself these questions: Where do I seek for and find my highest pleasure, my most perfect enjoyment? At the social club, or at the prayer-meeting? At the theater, or at the House of God? When success attends your path, when prosperity crowns your efforts, when laurels rest upon your brow, how then do you account for your propitious surroundings, or to whom do you give the credit? Do you say in your heart, My hand hath gotten

this wealth, My cunning and my skill have achieved this success? Or do you say, "God giveth the increase;" These blessings come from His hand; and to Him shall the voice of my thanksgiving ascend? When the days grow dark and dreary, when you feel sad and lonely, when business is not prosperous, when your best efforts to achieve success in your vocation have proved abortive, when your best aimed endeavors have been misunderstood, or misrepresented by your fellow men, when your friends have proved false and fickle, where then do you seek comfort and respite from care? To whom do you appeal with your burden of grief? Do you seek relief in the associations of the gay, the thoughtless, the mirthful, the worldly-minded? Or do you go to God for sympathy, for comfort, for aid, for strength, for Divine guidance, for Heavenly Grace? Apply these tests to your life, and you may readily know of what manner of spirit you are possessed.

If you are not fully satisfied in regard to your standing, in the sight of God, after a thorough

and candid self-examination, take the question to the Lord in earnest, contrite prayer, and, in childlike simplicity and confidence, ask him to show you clearly the ground you occupy, and to remove the clouds of uncertainty and doubt that obscure your moral sky; and then and there a flood of spiritual light will break in upon your soul—like the sun emerging from behind a thick cloud—a sweet, indescribable Peace and Joy will reign within, and with Job you can exclaim, “I KNOW that my Redeemer liveth.” But you ask, Is it important that I should know these things? Do you consider it important to you to know whether the title you hold to your earthly home is valid or not? How much more important then should you consider your title to ETERNAL LIFE and a Heavenly Inheritance? If you really have “within you” “THE KINGDOM OF GOD,”—RIGHTEOUSNESS AND PEACE AND JOY IN THE HOLY GHOST,—then, whatever may be your environments or your circumstances in life, no ill can be-tide you, no evil can befall you. “The bank

may break, the factory burn," or the earth may open a yawning chasm and swallow up your earthly possessions, but what matters it? Nothing. If you are really a child of God, an heir of Heaven, and a joint-heir with Jesus Christ, His Son, then, with Job, you can triumphantly and joyfully say, "THE LORD GAVE AND THE LORD HATH TAKEN AWAY; BLESSED BE THE NAME OF THE LORD!" "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." Yea, and the countless shining orbs that glitter on the celestial conclave, that illumine the boundless immensity of space, and that give life and light and fertility to myriads of attendant worlds, all, all these are His; for He hath made them. How abundantly able, then, is He to "give good things to them that ask Him!" And He is not only abundantly able, but abundantly willing. In His Word it is written, "Delight thyself in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart." "And He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday." The Lord will give GRACE

and GLORY; no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." The Psalmist says, "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay-tree. Yet he passed away, and lo, he was not: yea, I sought him but he could not be found." How sad, and yet how common are such scenes! But how striking the picture that rises on this dark background, when he says, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is PEACE."

CHAPTER IV

Sanctification, or Holiness of Heart



HAT the doctrine of Entire Sanctification, or Sinless Perfection, should have been the occasion of so much dissension and controversy among professed Christians seems strange indeed when we consider how clear and explicit are the teachings of the Sacred Scriptures in regard to this important part of the Divine Plan of human redemption.

But the real grounds of the difficulty—the stone of stumbling, so to speak—lies, it seems to me, in the fact, that the true nature of the doctrine has been mystified and veiled in obscurity by the false claims of fanatics, who assert the possibility of attaining, in this life, a state of moral perfection in which it becomes *impossible* for them to sin;—a doctrine clearly at variance with both reason and

Revelation: for God could not possibly take from man his right of choice, his Free Moral Agency, without doing violence to his very nature as an accountable being. And nowhere in His Word has He promised to do any such thing.—But what has He promised? In the very name JESUS we have the promise, “He shall save His people from their sins.” It is the nature of sin to defile, to contaminate, to tarnish, to pollute; and consequently the fact of man’s fall in Eden entailed on him and all his posterity, not only the Divine displeasure, but also moral degeneracy, actual depravity and uncleanness; insomuch that “It came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, that God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination, purpose, and desire of the thoughts of his heart were only evil continually.” Hence it became a matter of actual necessity that, if man were to be redeemed, and to become worthy to dwell in the purity of Heaven, in the presence of God and the angels of light, the plan of his res-

toration must embrace something more than mere pardon, something more than justification and remission of sins through the vicarious suffering of a Mediator. It must embrace a thorough cleansing and renewal of the moral nature. And there can be no doubt of the fact that the plan of salvation, as devised in the Divine Council of Heaven and executed and revealed by the Incarnate Son of God—who in the fulfillment of His purpose of Infinite Love laid down His own life that we through Him might live—was a perfect plan, a plan fully meeting the needs of the foulest of our fallen race. Yet there exists abundant evidence of the fact that pardon, or justification in the sight of God, is not always accompanied by a thorough renewal of the moral nature. The Apostle Paul, who was certainly in a justified relation to God, said, “When I would do good, evil is present with me.” “I delight in the LAW of GOD after the inward man: but I see *another law* in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into

captivity to the law of sin which is in my members:” And then, in deep contrition on account of the consciousness of indwelling sin, he exclaims, “O, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” And is not the testimony of Paul fully corroborated by our own personal experience? Most Christians, at least, know for themselves that after they have been pardoned and have received the Witness of the Spirit, testifying of their acceptance with God, they still have found within themselves unholy desires and inclinations—desires which, if gratified and encouraged, would lead them away from Christ and into condemnation. And this fact is evidence (*prima facie*) of the need of a deeper work of Grace in the heart, a more thorough renewal of the moral nature. But where, or how shall we obtain that perfect purity, that “Holiness without which no man can see the Lord?” It may be found only at the “Fountain opened to the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin, *and for un-*

cleanness." God's plan is not a failure. Christ's atonement is not partial. He did not redeem us from under the penalty of a violated law and leave us to be servants to sin. But He demands of us that we present our "bodies *a living sacrifice*, Holy, acceptable unto God;" and assures us that "He is able to save them *to the uttermost* that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." To "*save to the uttermost*" He certainly must of necessity first cleanse the fountain of our desires and affections, and then shall the waters flowing therefrom be pure and sweet and that continually. His ability *to save to the uttermost* is asserted as a consequence of the fact that "He ever liveth to make intercession for us; and nowhere has He promised us any safety except as we "abide in Him." Such is the nature of the defilement of sin that we can have indemnity therefrom only so long as we are in direct and vital connection with Christ, only so long as we preserve unbroken the current of communication between our hearts and

that great Fountain-head of Personal Purity. It is thus that we are to be "Kept by the Power of God through Faith unto Salvation." It is thus that we are, in His Name, in His Strength, in the Power of His Might, to "Go on from conquering unto conquest, and from victory unto full Salvation," until, at last, in Him we shall stand "Perfect and Entire, wanting nothing, and "Be filled with all the Fulness of God." It is thus and only thus that we are to be "*wholly*" or *entirely* "*sanctified*," and that our whole "*spirit and soul and body*" are to be "*preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*." "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ"—that is, the initiative or beginning principles—"let us go on unto Perfection." When we, through the pardon and remission of our sins, are born into the Kingdom of Grace, and are thereby become the children of God, then are we represented as "babes" needing to be fed with the "sincere milk" of the Gospel. But the grace given unto us at regeneration is not

designed to be a waning or residual quantity, nor yet an invariable quantity; for we are exhorted to "Grow in Grace." But how are we to grow? With all diligence we are to "Add to our Faith, Virtue; and to Virtue, Knowledge; and to Knowledge, Temperance; and to Temperance, Patience; and to Patience, Godliness; and to Godliness, Brotherly Kindness; and to Brotherly Kindness, Charity. What a grand and glorious array of Christian Graces are these! Magnificent Stepping-stones whereby the lowliest and most insignificant of God's dear children may ascend from the humble walks of earthly life, to a most glorious Immortality, a state of Immaculate Purity, and a Home with the Glorified Immortals! How grandly and how clearly defined, and yet how very natural and simple is the ascent! Any one can reach the first round of this ladder. It begins right down at the earth. The first step is Faith—that simple trust and confidence in God's Precious Promises which leads to Repentance and the acceptance of

proffered Mercy and Pardon. Having attained unto this first of the Heavenly Graces and its legitimate results, we are then to add thereto, Virtue, or the courage of moral manhood, courage to come out boldly on the Lord's side, and acknowledge Him before men. This done we are then to set about getting knowledge—knowledge of God's Word and of His will concerning us; that we may be able to give an answer to him that asketh us concerning the hope that is within us.

And having attained unto knowledge of the Way of Salvation, we are to add thereto Temperance, or moderation in all things—doing everything with an eye single to God's glory. And to Temperance, or moderation, we are to add Patience—a willingness “to labor and to wait,” leaving results with God. And to Patience we are to add Godliness, or Piety,—a spirit of devout and humble worship and of gratitude to God for all His rich gifts. And to Godliness, or Piety, we are to add Brotherly Kindness, or a spirit of help-

fulness to our fellow men, remembering that Christ, our great Judge, will say, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye did it unto Me." And finally, to Brotherly Kindness we are to add Charity, that Crown Jewel of all the Christian Graces—that broad and deep and magnanimous and all-embracing spirit of Love that "Thinketh no evil," but placeth on the actions and the motives of a brother the most favorable construction possible. Thus it is that we are to grow up into the spirit and likeness of Christ, our Living Head. Not in our own name or in our own strength are we to go forth to battle against the powers of evil, but in the name of Christ our risen Lord. "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might." "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with TRUTH, and having on the breast-

plate of RIGHTEOUSNESS, and your feet shod with the preparation of the GOSPEL OF PEACE."

"Above all, taking the shield of FAITH, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." "And take the helmet of SALVATION, and the SWORD OF THE SPIRIT, which is the WORD OF GOD." "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

"And be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but *be filled with the Spirit*; speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks *always for all things* unto God." "And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION, or the state of ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION, is not reached by a negative or subtracting process whereby we become dispossessed of our free will so that we could not sin if we chose to do so. Such an idea is

absurd, *preposterous*. Even Christ could have yielded to Satan, and have commanded the stones to be made bread; and shall we profess to be more holy than He? God forbid that we should hazard such presumption! "It is enough that the servant be as his master."

But those sublime heights of moral grandeur and excellence and true magnanimity of soul are attainable only by a positive process of addition and spiritual growth and amelioration; whereby they that strive "to be strengthened with might BY HIS SPIRIT in the inner man," "Go *from strength to strength*, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God," and "with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image *from glory to glory*, even as by the SPIRIT OF THE LORD." Changed into the image of the Lord! O glorious, wondrous change! O blessed transformation! God grant that, even now, it may be richly wrought in all our hearts! Great and glorious as is the change wrought in man's moral

nature by communion with the Divine Nature, and through the agency of the Holy Spirit, yet that change is wrought on principles strictly in accordance with natural law. It is a well established fact of physical science that any material organism—for instance, the human body—may be, and often is, materially affected and modified in its nature by the character of the substances on which it subsists and from which it must, by assimilation, derive its support, and the material for its growth and development. Why marvel then that the Inner Man, or Spiritual nature, should take on, in a measure, the distinctive characteristics of the food on which the mind subsists, and that those traits of character, and those principles of conduct with which we allow ourselves to become most familiar, and especially those around which we allow our affections to hover in sympathy or in admiration, should gradually enter into the very warp and woof of our being, and become integral parts of our own distinct personality?

The words “from glory to glory” seem to

indicate that the change to be wrought in us is to be gradual. And this, too, is in keeping with natural law. There is a good deal of truth in the saying of the renowned Professor Holbrook that "All *true* growth, and all *great* growth, is necessarily *slow* growth." And while we would not limit the power of God, by saying that this principle necessarily holds true in the realm of Spiritual growth; yet we may safely say that even here the same law generally prevails. Nevertheless God may, in answer to importunate prayer, or on account of some special consecration or some mighty exercise of faith on our part, actually work in us a sudden and mighty increase of spiritual strength, of moral power, in so much that we shall be led to think—and perhaps correctly too—that we have experienced a Second Change of Heart as distinct as that of Justification, or pardon; and we may, for the time being, believe that the work of cleansing, or moral renovation, in our hearts is complete, but we shall learn, by and by, from experience, that God never

gives us, at one time, so much Divine strength, so rich a blessing of Heavenly Grace, but that He has yet more in reserve for us; and that, even in this life, we may go on continually, "from strength unto strength," and "from glory unto glory." And this very fact of the illimitable nature of Divine Growth is one of the exceedingly grand and glorious characteristics of Spiritual Life; and will, no doubt, constitute, in a large measure, the Glory of the life beyond. It is also suggestive of another important fact, viz., that we can not long stand still on the great battle-field of life; we must either advance, or retreat—must make some progress, or else we shall retrograde through inactivity. In conclusion let us state the doctrine of Entire Sanctification so definitely as to leave no possibility of being misunderstood. You ask, will God in answer to prayer *instantaneously* cleanse me from *all* sin, and thoroughly renew my moral nature, so that there shall be found therein *no unholy desires*? And we answer, Yes. In a present sense, "All things

are possible to him that believeth." But you ask, Will He not remove evil so far from me, that I shall be out of danger? No; most emphatically no! and for reasons already explained. Paul asked that the "thorn in the flesh" might be removed; but the answer came, "My Grace is sufficient for thee;" we must ask day by day, and hour by hour, to be "Kept by the Power of God." But does not *instantaneous cleansing* preclude the necessity and remove the possibility of a "Growth in Grace?" Nay, verily; it only prepares the way for a constant and rapid Spiritual growth. You need not be afraid of becoming such a "spiritual giant," that there will be no more room left you for growth. Goodness is one of the attributes of God, and hence is Infinite in nature.

CHAPTER V

Emmanuel—God With Us—or The Blessedness of The Divine Presence



WHILE our fore-parents kept inviolate the precepts of the Lord and dwelt in Primitive Purity in the beautiful Garden of Eden, they were free from the intrusion of fear or the invasion of sorrow or pain. In that sequestered and peaceful dale, under skies that ever smiled, beneath waving boughs laden with luscious, spontaneous fruits, beside placid rivers clear as crystal, walked and lived and loved that happy pair. And there, no doubt, they raised their tuneful voices in anthems clear and sweet, and with the happy birds that flitted among the verdant bowers, sang the praises of their Creator. And they sang not as to a God whom they recognized as existing somewhere *far away*: for God Himself,

even the Infinite and Eternal One, deigned to come and walk and commune with them. And they looked not for His coming with fear and trembling, but awaited His daily visitations with eager delight, as one awaits the coming of a very dear friend; for to them His presence meant Sunshine and Gladness and "Fullness of Joy."

But after the terrible demon Sin came and laid his foul hand on that once happy pair, to pollute and defile, and stole from manhood's brow the crown of Spotless Purity which God had placed there to mark them as His Own, how different, alas how very different became their condition! They no longer hailed with gladness the coming of their Creator nor rejoiced at the knowledge of His presence, but a mantle of shame covered them, and the consciousness of guilt filled them with terror, and they sought to hide away from Him among the dense foliage of the trees. Since that dark and doleful day man has been, by nature, an outcast, an exile, an alien, an impenitent and hopeless prodigal.

But coupled with the gracious promise of redemption from under the curse of sin stands the scarcely less important promise of the return of the Divine Presence, the restoration of the Divine Image, and the re-establishment of the severed chain of intimate communion between God and man.

And God spake through His servant Moses to the faithful in Israel saying, "THE ETERNAL GOD IS THY REFUGE, AND UNDERNEATH ARE THE EVERLASTING ARMS." Where in all the repositories of human language, rich and replete with metaphors, figures and similitudes, can there be found a more beautiful representation of protection, of tender care, of love and sympathy than that of a fond mother folding her babe in her arms? And what more perfect security, what higher state of happiness can mortal man conceive or desire than to be thus folded in the Everlasting Arms of God's Infinite Love? (O how little we usually see of the beauty and sublime grandeur, and how lightly we appreciate the real worth of these "Exceeding Great and Precious Promises" !

How frequently and how fervently we need to pray the prayer of the Psalmist: "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy Law.") God spake to Joshua, and through him to all His children of every age and clime, saying, "Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: *for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.*" O fearful heart, O doubting spirit, what more perfect assurance dost thou desire? And does not God's Word abound in promises like these? God has been pleased in all ages past to reveal to His devout and faithful children the blessed fact of His abiding presence, as a gracious friend full of all tenderness, compassion, sympathy and love, and as a sure Rock of Refuge in every time of need. When He brought His people out of Egyptian bondage, He went before them by day as a Pillar of Cloud,—typical of His overshadowing love and mercy,—and by night, as a Pillar of Fire, He stood in the rear, to protect them from their enemies. And

again was His glorious presence revealed in the Sacred Shechinah, or Visible Majesty of God, a gentle light of unearthly glory and beauty, a light of Holiness and Love Divine, which rested between the cherubim of the Tabernacle. And at other times He manifested Himself by fire which came down from Heaven and consumed the sacrifices upon the altar. Even now, by imagination, methinks I hear in the Courts of the Lord, the voice of song and gladness; it is the voice of David, the "Sweet Singer of Israel." The joy of his heart breaks forth in the melody of song. A glad thrill of animation trembles in his voice and vibrates in the strings of his harp. His theme is "THE DIVINE UBIQUITY," his song, "IF I ASCEND UP INTO HEAVEN, THOU ART THERE." "IF I TAKE THE WINGS OF THE MORNING, AND DWELL IN THE UTTERMOST PARTS OF THE SEA; EVEN THERE SHALL THY HAND LEAD ME, AND THY RIGHT HAND SHALL HOLD ME." O blessed assurance that we may thus have God's presence ever with us, and His Unseen and All Powerful Hand to lead us "*whither-*

soever we go”! What richer provision for happiness could mortal man desire? Need we then ask the question, What is Heaven? or Where is Heaven? I think not. To be in perfect harmony with God, to realize that JESUS IS MINE AND I AM HIS, and that *He saves me even now* from the power of sin; to know that “WITH JESUS MY SAVIOR, I AM A CHILD OF THE KING”—the Great King of Heaven—is certainly, of itself, Heaven on Earth begun; yea, and it would be Heaven *anywhere* in the boundless universe. And what matters it to us whether Heaven, the state of Future Blessedness “reserved” for all the finally faithful, be in reality a city having Jasper walls and Gates of Pearl and Streets of Purest Gold, where the re-embodied spirits of saints dwell with their risen and enthroned Lord bearing yet in His body the marks of the price He paid for the ransom of His fallen and unworthy children; or whether all these beautiful expressions are only typical of the sublime spiritual and moral glory that await us, when we shall

have entered more fully into the rich blessedness of Perfect Harmony with the Divine Nature? These things we do not know, nor need we care. It is vain for us to speculate as to the locality of the final abode of the Redeemed—if indeed it may be considered as a locality.—Whether we shall fly away to some remote part of the universe, or whether this very earth, renewed by fire and purged from the curse of sin, shall become our Immortal Home, concerns us not. Enough it is for us to know that GOD WILL BE WITH US, and that “WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM;” that HIS GLORIOUS IMAGE, lost by sin, shall be restored by Grace Divine. But this we do know, that the Glory and Blessedness of Heaven is, and will be, due to the revealed Presence of the Divine Spirit of Infinite Love, and to the Perfect Holiness, the Spotless Purity of those who dwell there. True God is, in a certain sense, present everywhere, but it is the revelation of His presence, His genial life-giving smile of approbation, the “Witness of the Spirit,” that brings the sunshine of

Heaven into our hearts even now, makes the religion of the Bible a religion of positive experimental knowledge, and renders Heaven a vital reality of the Living Present. Be not deceived, My Dear Brother, or Sister, if you have not within you this experimental knowledge of God's abiding presence, which is termed in Scripture the "Witness of the Spirit," you are living beneath your privilege as a Christian.

"To him who in the love of nature holds communion with her visible forms, she speaks a varied language." And the different attributes of the Divine Nature are revealed by different manifestations. "The Heavens declare *the glory of God*, and the firmament showeth *His handiwork*." And we may read something of *His power and greatness* in the whirlwind's wrath, and the earthquake's shock, or in the forked lightnings that play athwart the sky, or rend the giant oak. All these sublime and terrible demonstrations generally fill the mind of the beholder with awe and veneration. And to

him who has not lost all susceptibility of receiving impressions from Nature's milder teachings, she speaks in a language none the less clear and distinct of God's *Gentlenesss, Goodness, Mercy and Love*. The sunshine warm and tender, the waving boughs decked in verdant or variegated foliage, or laden with luscious fruits, the opening flowers charming the eye with their brilliant colors, and filling the air with their rich odors, all these things, yea, and many more, testify in unmistakable language of the exceeding amiableness of the Divine Nature, of God's great magnanimity, and of His matchless loving-kindness toward the sons of men. And yet, lest their teaching be not understood, He has revealed Himself to us in His Holy Word; and farther still to make a personal application of the lessons taught, and to put us continually in remembrance, has sent into each believing, trusting heart the Blessed Witness, the Holy Spirit, that we may know for ourselves, not only that He is a God of Mercy and Love, but that we are His, that we have been redeemed and

bought with the price of His own precious blood. The importance of the influence wielded over the human mind by the promptings and the gentle wooings of this Ministering Angel of Mercy, the Third Person of the Adorable Trinity, can scarcely be conceived aright. Argument, though backed by demonstrations seemingly the most incontrovertible, may yet fail of bringing settled conviction and satisfactory conclusions to the mind of man when inquiring after important truth; and incredulity under such circumstances is not always blameworthy: for, at the present age, so plausible and so apparently unanswerable are many of the sophistries and arguments in support of false theories, that it seems unsafe to trust alone to human reason in settling some of the most vital questions that confront us. Since "The children of this world are wiser than the children of light," and since we have been warned that the spirit of antichrist which is abroad in the land "shall deceive, if possible, the very elect," it certainly behooves us to take heed what

we believe, to take our doubts and misgivings to God in earnest prayer, and to ask that the promised "Comforter," "The Holy Ghost," "The Divine Spirit," speaking to our hearts as "A Still Small Voice," shall guide us into all Truth;—for "The Spirit itself is Truth." But how prone, alas, are we, even at our best estate, to forget the Source whence cometh our strength, to wander away from our High Tower and Rock of Refuge, to tremble and cower before human adversaries, as though man were able to pluck us out of the hand of Him in whom we trust. Shame! Shame! What base poltroons are we! No wonder the compassionate Son of God, the sympathizing Jesus, wept over the "little faith" of humanity. And no wonder, when His little band of followers were gathered on sequestered Olivet's halcyon brow to witness His ascension to the Father, that He, after giving to them the great commission of evangelizing the world, should leave to them as His last great legacy the exceedingly rich and comforting assurance, "Lo, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS,

EVEN UNTO THE END OF THE WORLD." "And," said He, "behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." "And He lifted up His hands and blessed them." And "While they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight."

Seeing that Christ, our risen Lord, is ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father, how then, you ask, is fulfilled the promise of His abiding presence? Christ repeatedly affirmed that He and the Father are One. And again we are told that "There are three that bear record in Heaven, The Father, The Word, and The Holy Ghost: and these three are One." Hence we see that The Spirit of Truth which beareth witness with our spirit, and which is sent from The Father as a messenger of Comfort and Grace, is truly a Divine Being, and One with The Father and The Son. But that you say is involved in mystery! Yes, "Great is the mystery of godliness!" but

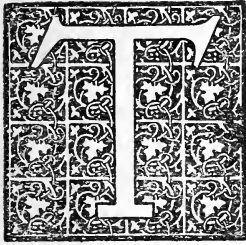
it is a blessed and glorious mystery.

How close, how wondrously close and intimate the relationship existing between the Divine Redeemer and His Ransomed Sons and Daughters! And how inspiring the thought that as Children of God, and, through the Riches of His Grace, heirs of a glorious Immortality, we may maintain a constant communion, yea, a blessed fellowship, with the Eternal and Infinite Father, at whose word of command all the shining orbs of the boundless universe move on in grandeur majestic and sublime, and who nevertheless condescends, for man's pleasure, to make the modest violet grow! And how transcendently glorious the blessed fact that we may not only hold intimate communion with the Eternal and Infinite One, but may, by means of such communion, become daily and continually more and more like Him in the varied attributes of His Goodness, Greatness and Glory! O who can fathom the wondrous depths of the condescension of Divinity, or measure the sublime heights to

which humanity may by God's grace ascend!
Or who can fully conceive the extent of the
felicity that mortal man may attain through
the medium of a consecrated, devout and
loyal spirit striving ever to grow into perfect
harmony and unison with the Divine Mind!

CHAPTER VI

The Higher Life Beyond



HE Immaculate Son of God left the Glory Land with all the Infinite Loveliness and Dazzling Beauty and Glory Sublime that surround the Great White Throne, where the serene light of Holiness and Love never grows dim, the harmonious anthems of Joy and Peace never cease, and where the bloom of Life's Fair Tree never fades; and came down to earth to suffer and die, that man through His death might inherit life, and become with Him a partaker of the glory which He had with the Father before the world was. And the language of mortals is far too feeble to express the richness, the fulness, the blessedness of the life that comes to man, *even here*, when he unreservedly accepts God's free gift of liberty from the dominion of sin, becomes

—by adoption and free grace—a member of the household of faith, and starts on his upward career toward the sublime heights that lume up on his moral horizon; for he can see from the beginning that Life's Shining Way leads continually onward and upward. And as he advances step by step along the King's Highway of Holiness, and as he journeys day by day up the hill of Christian Progress toward the "Celestial City," he finds the path growing brighter continually. The attractions of that great central luminary, the "Sun of Righteousness," toward which he is moving, like the centripetal force in the natural world, increases as the distance decreases; while, on the other hand, the follies and the vain allurements of earth, as he recedes from them, gradually lose their power over him and fade from his view, in like manner as earth seems to recede from one who goes up in a balloon, or the shore from him who goes out on the ocean. And thus it is that man "Grows in Grace," grows "Strong in the Lord and in the power of His might." And

thus it is that as we draw nigh unto God, He—both seemingly and in reality—draws nigh unto us. But here our comparisons fail utterly, and material similitudes can carry us no farther; for all earthly things, however vast, have limitations—a beginning and an ending—whereas the career of the child of God is an Infinite career, and knows no bounds, save in Him who is Alpha and Omega, the very personification and embodiment of Infinity.

That which we call death is but a passage through the portals that connect the imperfect and rudimentary stage of man's existence with the higher and nobler and more comprehensive stage in which he shall enjoy immensely greater facilities and more glorious opportunities for spiritual and intellectual advancement and amelioration; but a glorious transition from a state of trial and adversity, affliction and bereavement to a state of reward and fruition and a blessed consummation of the noble purposes and aspirations around which the activities of his earthly

life have clustered, and in which his powers of mind and soul have been exercised; but a coming forth from the crucible, as gold by fire refined, or as a jewel polished by grinding, a lustrous diadem to shine in the glory of Heaven for the honor of the Master, and not by its own light either, but by reflecting the light of the Infinite and Eternal One. What work our hands will find to do, what missions will engage our ransomed powers, what aspirations and hopes, what achievements and successes will make up the sum of our business and our pleasure in that higher sphere of life beyond we do not now fully know. But we may be well assured that Christ, our risen Lord, and the great captain of our Salvation, who while on earth said, "It is My meat and My drink to do the will of Him that sent me," will find—or rather has already provided—some avocation congenial and commensurate to our varied powers and susceptibilities—some activity in which our re-embodied spirits shall find both meat and drink, and, in short, all the ele-

ments and circumstances requisite to continued spiritual growth. And as LOVE is the fundamental law of spiritual life now, and all God's laws are immutable, we may surely infer that it will be the same in Heaven, that to love God with all the soul and all the mind and all the strength that in us lies, and to love our fellow man as ourselves, will be an important part of our work over there. And as love to God implies a desire to know more of Him, and to be more like Him, one of the great aspirations of our blood-bought and "love-bound" immortal spirits will be to sit at the Master's feet and learn of Him the lesson of that wondrous love that brought Him down to earth our souls to redeem; and thus we shall constantly become more fully partakers of the Divine Nature, and constantly "Grow up into Him who is our Living Head," and thus constantly "From life's flowing Fountain drink endless pleasures in."

CHAPTER VII

Vital Godliness—How Obtained and Retained



REGENERATION—a justified relation to God—or the restoration in the human soul of the Divine Image, lost by sin, is not an end, to be by growth or culture *attained*, but rather a gracious gift from God—a glorious boon to be *obtained* by the sincere seeker, solely through the merit of the Great Atonement, and simply for the asking. The unregenerate man can not cause his heart of stone to grow into a heart of flesh: but God says, “I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.” By disobedience man has been severed from the True Vine, and by the Divine Hand alone can he be grafted again into that Vine. Neither can righteousness be acquired, superinduced, or put on by compliance with external ordinances and

ceremonies. "By Grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works."

So radical is the change that must be wrought in the human nature to bring it into covenant relationship with God, that it is frequently termed in Scripture, *a new birth*. Christ declares to Nicodemus, "Except a man *be born again*, he can not see the Kingdom of God." This means something more than breaking away from evil habits and associations; something more than being sorry for past sin (in view of the consequences which necessarily follow); something more than a confession of sin, and a profession of an historical belief in the teachings of God's Word; something more than forming good resolutions for the future, becoming identified with the visible Church by conforming to, and complying with, its external rites and ceremonies; something more than living a life of strict morality, and even of generosity and self-sac-

rificing (for Paul declares, "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing"); something more than preserving a reputation above reproach, and, like the church of Sardis, having a name to live when thou art dead. (Rev. 3: 1.) This *new birth* implies (1) pardon for past offences (Acts 26: 18), (2) a renewal of the moral nature (Matt. 18: 3), (3) the gift of the Holy Spirit and of Eternal Life (Rom. 8: 9 and John 3: 36), and (4) the Witness of the Spirit bearing testimony to our own consciousness of our renewal by Grace Divine, and our adoption into the Kingdom of Grace—the Family of the Redeemed (Rom. 8: 16 and 1 John 5: 10).

But how shall one receive this *new birth*? By earnest and importunate prayer. By coming in simple trust to Christ who declares Himself to be THE WAY, THE TRUTH, and THE LIFE, and who says, "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you."

And how shall we retain this justified relation to God? "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin;" and so we have in Christ both a Present and an Everlasting Salvation. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." "*Any other creature,*" or any external power, or influence, shall be unable to harm us while we "abide in Him"; but let us beware of *self* and of indwelling *sin*, that we be not "cast forth as a branch," and "be withered," and thus become fit fuel for the fires of everlasting destruction.

Valedictory



MY DEAR READER and Fellow-traveler, through this changeful and evanescent time-world, to the land of Permanence and Abiding Realities, where rise in dazzling splendors the Mansions of the Blest around the Great White Throne of Christ, our King:—In bidding thee Adieu, the question of greatest moment, of most vital importance to me is this, Have I succeeded in writing anything that will inspire and encourage thee on life's Pilgrimage, anything that under the Divine Blessing shall be instrumental in leading thee onward and upward along the Shining Way of Holy Living, anything that will enable thee to gain firmer footing on the Rock of Eternal Truth, to drink more freely, more deeply, more constantly from the flowing fountains of Living Waters, to feast more fully on

Heavenly Manna, to ascend higher and yet higher on the mountains of the blessed Beulah Land, where thou mayest walk more in the glorious sunlight of God's Redeeming Love? If I have thus succeeded in lending a hand of helpfulness to lead thee to a better life, then my labors have not been in vain.

This little volume is the result of an humble effort, on the part of one of the weakest and most insignificant of God's children, to do good. It bears on every page the impress of human imperfection, and yet it is sent forth with a sincere hope, and an earnest prayer, that its words may be so backed by the power and energy of the Holy Spirit that its readers shall be benefited and God's Name be glorified. And now, My Dear Reader, I must say, FARE THEE WELL! and may the fullness of God's rich Grace, and His abounding Love, and tender Mercies ever be the portion of thine inheritance.

Yours in Christian Love,

J. RIGGS LONG.

THE JOURNAL

OF THE

ROYAL SOCIETY

Crown Jewels
or
Golden Gleanings of Religious
Thought

Crown Jewel No. 1.



Decide ...

Because you see reason
... for decision ...

Then Act ...

Because you have
... decided ! ...



Let your actions follow the guidance
of your Judgment and the dictates of your
Conscience, and if between them both
you go over the Falls of Niagara, Go!
It is the only course worthy of a Man.

—Horace Bushnell.

Crown Jewel No. 2

We Shall Be Immortal

By Mrs. Mary B. Wingate

1. Oft we tire of service here,
Oft the flesh is weary,
Oft we shed the burning tear,
Oft our way is dreary.
But the cares of life will cease
When we cross the portal.
We shall find a sweet release—
We shall be immortal.
2. Oft we grieve o'er loved ones flown,
Oft we weep in sorrow;
Oft we long to clasp our own
On some bright to-morrow.
But no shadows will annoy
When we cross the portal,
Sorrow will be turned to joy—
We shall be immortal.
3. Do we love the Savior more?
Are we onward pressing?
Do we sing His praises o'er?
Do we share His blessing?
Then the darkness will be light
When we cross the portal,
We shall walk with Him in white,
We shall be immortal.

4. Are we watching, waiting here?
Are our lamps all burning,
For a time that's drawing near,
For our Lord's returning?
Some of us may stand to-night
Just outside the portal,
And before the morning light
Find ourselves immortal.

Crown Jewel No 3

We Shall Be Like Him

1. "We shall be like Him"—blessed thought!
Alas! we are not like Him now.
Less patiently we bare the cross,
Less meekly do we suffer loss,
Than He who our redemption bought
With thorny crown on dying brow.
"We shall be like Him"—blessed thought!
2. "We shall be like Him"—free from sin;
On Him temptation lost its power.
We shall be pure without a stain,
When we that blissful state attain;
Aye! pure without and pure within.
In that ecstatic longed-for hour
"We shall be like Him"—free from sin.
3. "We shall be like Him"—glory-crowned,
Immortal, clad in robes of light;
Beyond the power of aught to harm,

Beyond the sound of death's alarm,
No more by limitations bound
Of time and flesh and earthly sight—
"We shall be like Him"—glory-crowned.

4. "We shall be like Him;" yet I know—
Within my soul it soundeth clear—
We, somehow, *must* His image bear,
We, some way, *must* His spirit share,
Our lives *must* something of Him show,
We *must* be like Him even here,
If we would there His likeness know

—*Author Unknown.*

Crown Jewel No 4

There Is No Death

By J. I. McCreery

1. THERE IS NO DEATH! The stars go down
To rise upon some fairer shore,
And bright in Heaven's jeweled crown
They shine forever more.

2. There is no death. The dust we tread
Shall change beneath the summer shower
To golden grain, or mellow fruit,
Or rainbow-tinted flowers.

3. The granite rocks disorganize
To feed the hungry moss they bear;
The forest leaves drink daily life
From out the viewless air.

4. The bird-like voice, whose joyous tones
Made glad this scene of sin and strife,
Sings now an everlasting song,
Amid the Tree of Life.

5. And where He sees a smile so bright,
Of heart too pure for taint and vice,
He bears it to that world of light,
To dwell in Paradise.

6. There is no death; the leaves may fall,
The flowers may fade and pass away—
They only wait through wintry hours
The coming of the May.

7. There is no death. But angel forms
Walk o'er the earth with silent tread;
They bear our best loved things away,
And then we call them "dead."

8. They leave our hearts all desolate—
They pluck our fairest, sweetest flowers;
Transplanted into bliss, they now
Adorn immortal bowers.

9. Born into that undying life,
They leave us but to come again;
We welcome them—the same
Except in sin and pain.

10. And ever near us, though unseen,
The dear immortal spirits tread;
For all the boundless Universe
Is LIFE. THERE ARE NO DEAD.

Crown Jewel No. 5

Spiritual Growth

"To be spiritually minded is life and peace."

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!

Leave thy low-vaulted past!

Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from Heaven with a dome more vast!

Till thou at length art free.

Leaving thine out-grown shell by life's unresting
sea! —Holmes.

Crown Jewel No. 6

The Future Life

By Victor Hugo



FEEL in myself the future life.
I am like a forest which has
been more than once cut down.
The new shoots are stronger
and livelier than ever. I am
rising, I know, toward the sky. The sun-
shine is over by head. The earth gives me
its generous sap, but Heaven lights me with
the reflection of unknown worlds.

You say the soul is nothing but the resultant of bodily powers, why then is my soul the more luminous when my bodily powers begin to fail? Winter is on my head and eternal spring is in my heart. I breathe at this hour the fragrance of the lilies, the violets and the roses as at twenty years. The nearer I approach the end, the plainer I hear around me the immortal symphonies of the worlds which unite me. It is marvelous, yet simple. It is a fairy tale, and it is history.

For half a century I have been writing my thoughts in prose, verse, history, philosophy, drama, romance, tradition, satire, ode, song, —I have tried all. But I feel that I have not said the thousandth part of what is in me. When I go down to the grave I can say, like so many others, "I have finished my day's work;" but I cannot say, "I have finished my life." My day's work will begin again the next morning. The tomb is not a blind alley, it is a thoroughfare. It closes in the twilight to open with the dawn.

I improve every hour because I love this world as my fatherland. My work is only a beginning. My work is hardly above its foundation. I would be glad to see it mounting and mounting forever. The thirst for the infinite proves infinity.

Crown Jewel No. 7

Divine Peace

1. Peace upon peace, like wave on wave,
This is the portion that I crave;
The peace of God which passeth thought;
The peace of Christ that changeth not.
2. Peace like the river's gentle flow,
Peace like the morning's silent glow,
From day to day in love supplied,
An endless and unebbing tide.
3. Peace flowing on, without decrease,
From Him who is our joy and peace,
Who, by His reconciling blood
Hath made the sinner's peace with God
4. Peace through the night and through the day,
Peace through all windings of our way,
In pain and toil and weariness,
A deep and everlasting peace.

5. O, KING OF PEACE, this peace bestow
Upon a stranger here below;
O, GOD OF PEACE, Thy peace impart
To every troubled, trembling heart.

6. Peace from the Father and the Son,
Peace from the Spirit all his own;
Peace that shall nevermore be lost,
Of Father Son and Holy Ghost.

—*Horatius Bonar.*

Crown Jewel No. 8

Our Homeland

1. "Just beyond life's purpling twilight,
And its sunset gates of gold,
Lies a land of wondrous beauty,
Full of joy and peace untold.

2. Just beyond life's moaning surges,
And its billows' ceaseless roll,
Hidden from earth-dimmed vision,
Lies the homeland of the soul.

3. And though hidden by the shadows,
Glorious sunshine sometimes falls,
Radiant gleams of Heaven's splendor,
From its jeweled jasper walls.

4. Just beyond our weary watching,
Just beyond our doubts and fears,
Just beyond our hopes and longings,
Just beyond our pain and tears,

5. Just beyond the curtain lifting,
 We shall see the glittering towers
 Of that distant longed-for haven,
 In God's summerland of flowers."

Crown Jewel No. 9

Partakers of the Divine Nature

By Rev. Charles D. Parkhurst

"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine Nature."



PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE"—that is enough for a text. I do not know how much we can make out of it, but God grant that it may make something out of us. It is waste of time now to take the text and spin it out into fine threads. You are certain to spoil a cocoon in the process of working it over into skein=silk. "PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE!" Never mind what the Greek of it is. That is the English of it, and the English-speaking people will have to be saved by the

English-speaking Gospel. Never mind what Alford, Lightfoot, or the schoolmen think or have written about it. There is something *great* here, and we want to leave it great. Some things have to be minced in order to reduce to use. Corn must be ground before it can become meal and make bread. But the mountains must be let alone. A wide, thrilling landscape wants no comment but a warm eye, no picture frame but the sky. Language has a pretty hard stint when it tries to tell us the *great* things of the Gospel. Words, though written by a pen dipped in fire and manipulated by a Spirit-anointed evangelist, can not show us wide matters when we are looking with narrow eyes. He that hath ears to hear let him hear. He that hath eyes to see let him see. Words do not show us things, they tell us where to look for them. This Gospel even does not give us the Heavens, but it is a God-wrought telescope at the eye-piece of which we can kneel down and look up into the Heavens. Christianity is to me what I see in the Heavens when look-

ing through this telescope. When I am blind I will take some one's else description of the Celestial Field and the Constellations that blossom along its furrows; but till then give me God's telescope and God's stars, and away with your pictures, your charts, and your diagrams.

"PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE!"—Our look, then, this morning, is at something that needs a long sweep of the eye. Habits of microscopic inspection will be fatal to all attempts at a range so remote and cloud-piercing. Men who spend nine-tenths of their time polishing needles and counting the lenses in a fly's eye will not accomplish much the other tenth trying to interpret the handwriting of God on the sky. Small looking makes small seeing, and myopia when so induced wipes out the superlative splendors both of a man's astronomical and his spiritual firmament.

Our verse will at least give aim to our vision, and, although it may lie away out like a patch of star-mist in the untraveled

spaces, yet perhaps it will grow upon our eye and take a little more shape before our eye; although even unresolved and indeed unresolvable star-mist floating in the cosmic distance is a million times fuller of thrill than the same mist condensed into drops and represented by ink-spatters in white on your study-table.

“PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE,” which is to say taking part in the DIVINE NATURE. Not simply like God, but in a way shareholders in Him,—something, possibly, as the waves of the sea are the partakers in the sea; something it may be as the leaves of a tree share in the life of the tree. Not that we attach great value to such parables save as they give the thought an upward incline. We are not afraid of widening out the area of our humanity along the line of its upward frontier. It is childish for one who happens to know a little more than his neighbor to boast of his superiority to his neighbor; but it is another thing for a man to be intelligently and gratifiedly conscious of that in him-

self which he has in common with his neighbor and in common with all his neighbors. It is the difference between self-conceit and self-respect. The little differences between us make us conceited; the wide and profound fundamentals of our common nature are the grounds of our self-respecting.

Man differs in one very peculiar regard from the brute; not only in moving in a higher range of life and experience, but in not being tethered to any fixed condition. The brute is a brute, and always a brute. Improve your dog, and he will still be brutal. Debase your dog, and he will still be brutal and evince no symptoms of dropping to a lower grade of being. However miserable he may be as a dog, he will still be a perfect dog, and give no indication of degenerating to the inferior nature of a vegetable or a mineral. The dog is tied to his conditions; he can neither apostatize from caninity, nor be trained nor re-created into humanity. He stays where he is put. Once a dog always a dog!

On the contrary there is a just sense in which you can say of humanity that it is not so much a condition as it is a position of poise between two alternative conditions. It is like standing at the half-way point on the Gemmi Pass in Switzerland. You look down to the profound depths beneath you, or you turn and look up to the superb heights above you, but you are not going to stop there nor to live there. There is no house at the spot. It is not a place to remain, but a place from which to look off. You are either on your way down the pass to Leuker-Bad, or you are on your way up the pass to the Wild-strubel; it is merely a position of poise between two alternative destinations.

A good deal of the same thing we can say about our humanity, and by our humanity I mean the general complex of powers and possibilities that we bring with us into our life here. We have not so much a sense of fixity as we have presentment of destiny. We are a looking-off place. There are no conveniences for remaining where we are.

The longer we wait the more distinctly we feel that we must go. Conflicting impulses may draw us both ways, but that can not continue indefinitely. We shall have to choose between the two, and follow our choice. Every man knows how near he is to being a brute, and every man knows how near he is to the alternative destiny. A frontier line touches both countries. Humanity is a kind of watershed, off from which the rivers all flow, and flow to opposite points of the compass. We look down as far as we can, and call the indistinguishable bottom Hell; we look up as high as we can, and call the indistinguishable summit Heaven. Hell is humanity slipped down the pass till it has become bestial. Heaven is humanity climbed up the pass till it attains to the Divine. That is the geography of the three worlds. All written religions have portrayed it, because every human heart has felt itself *in transitu*, and has had a sense of alternative destinies. I address myself in this not to your interpretation of Scripture,

but to your interpretation of your own minds. Scripture is written on a ruled page, and the lines to which even the inspired pen conforms itself are such as are first laid down in the general consciousness of the race.

Ye are partakers of the Divine Nature. Our thought to-day is particularly up the pass, not down. There is more danger in a theology that differences man from God than in one which assimilates man to God. There is, as a rule, more quickening stimulus in the prospect of victory than there is in the danger of defeat. Few men ever become great through fear of remaining small. There is more incentive in trying to get to the top of the class than in trying to keep away from the bottom of it.

The Hebrew economy, as recorded for us in the Old Testament Scriptures, plays indeed an important part in the history of the Christian idea. But in those old times it was the ineffable holiness and the inaccessible greatness of God that was steadily advertised. Men were not encouraged to draw nigh unto

God. All arrangements of the Hebrew system discouraged everything of the kind. All the dramatic accompaniments of Divine manifestation (as the giving of the law) were suggestive of nothing so much as of the unconquerable distance that separated between God and His people. The provisional purpose in all this it would not be difficult to state; but the fact that just now concerns us is that so long as this relation of things lasted, men never began to become Godlike. There is no incentive to the effort to draw nigh to One of whom the only thought we have is that He is absolutely unapproachable; or to become like One of whom the chief thing we have been told is that He is absolutely inimitable.

In this respect, as in some others, the New Testament marks a distinct advance in the history of religious unfolding. Having been taught for thousands of years that God is unspeakably holy and ineffably high and lifted up, Christ comes and says, "But then that need not hinder your coming close to Him,

and holding fellowship with Him." There is a great deal in having a prospect; and when Christ came and gave men a prospect, and taught them that there was no absurdity and no profanity in their seeking after God withal He was so holy, and walking with Him withal He was a Heaven-enthroned God, they became great enough for the act, and in the act they were made like Him.

We must not abate (I am afraid we do, to a certain extent, but we ought not abate) the old Hebrew habit of celebrating the glory and majesty of God. We enfeeble our religious life and pauperize our devout loyalties when we embrace with our reverent regards only those Divine properties that scatter through the fine-meshed sieve of our affections. Tone and strength are by these means sacrificed. It is the "majestic sweetness," it is the regal loveliness of our God to which we are invited, to whose contacts we have admission guaranteed us, the very effect of which contacts it is to have the communication of His own Divineness made over to

us, the reproduction of His own eternal Spirit consummated within us.

This matter of knowing God and of being in fellowship with Him is wide and wonderful. There are rich and startling depths of meaning contained in it; and the meaning we must not be afraid of nor shrink to stand by. We will look a moment in this direction and let come what will. Our philosophers object to what is, in rather a schoolish way, called "anthropomorphism;" that is, the habit of representing God as possessed of modes and features of being that belong to man. Now we do that, and so long as we continue to do that we must be prepared for the consequences; we must be prepared to confess that the human and the Divine have that in common which makes common terms admissible; that there is a point where the two easily touch so that there is no telling where one leaves off and the other begins; a point—a good many of them perhaps—so belonging to both that whether you call them human or Divine will depend on preference and taste.

This is no place to dwell on the metaphysics of the matter. We are only trying to bring our own thoughts into beat with the rhythm of thought as it evinces itself all the way through the Gospel. It comes out in the conception which the Gospel gives us of Jesus Christ. You can call Him human; you can call Him Divine; most of us call Him both; and when we call Him both, and name Him a Divine man, our idea is not that a part of Him is one, and a part the other, and the two parts bound by some nondescript Siamese ligament, but that humanity at its best, and Divinity under limitation, are in such way identical that they can justly bear either name.

We are not trying to explain incarnation we are only trying to see what it is that we who believe in incarnation really assent to in believing it. We assent to it that Divinity and humanity are to such degree identical that the Founder of our religion could be both inside of one homogeneous personality; something as you can draw two circumferences in

such a way as to have them intersect each other, and a part of the contained area, therefore, belong at the same time to both circles. We are not attempting to gain so clear-cut a conviction of this matter that we can make a memorandum of it in our diary. We are simply trying to look in the right direction—in the direction indicated by our verse—and to let what hangs in the air imprint itself on our eyes in its own way.

Now that God has become man (an idea familiar to the religions of the world elsewhere as well as in Christendom), now that the Divine has once become human without ceasing to be Divine, all necessary distinction between the two declares itself rubbed out. Now see what follows. If God can humanize the Divine to the point of its becoming man, as in the instance of Jesus, what is to hinder Him, in the exercise of the same omnipotence, from deifying man to the point of his becoming Divine? It is no farther from the bottom of the mountain to the top than it is from top to bottom. Now that, my friends, as we

read the Gospel, is exactly what the blessed Spirit is trying to do with us. God became like us, that we might become like God. He is seeking to lead us back over the same road that He came down. Sanctification the reverse of incarnation! Never mind definitions; we are looking in the right direction. "PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE."

"Now are we the sons of God." It is all in that word "sons." There is community through identity. You can not get sonship in any other way. You may spend a score of years fashioning marble into expressions of your own ideals of beauty and grace, but those statues it would scarcely occur to you to call your sons and your daughters. Sonship and fellowship come only from being shareholders in one common life. Christ was not the creature of God, but the Son of God, only because He and His Father were one. The dog on the hearth-rug! The boy on his father's lap! One and the same life looks from the father's eye into the son's eye, and from the son's eye into the father's eye.

Mystery? There is mystery everywhere. We are only looking at the star-mist out in the wide spaces.

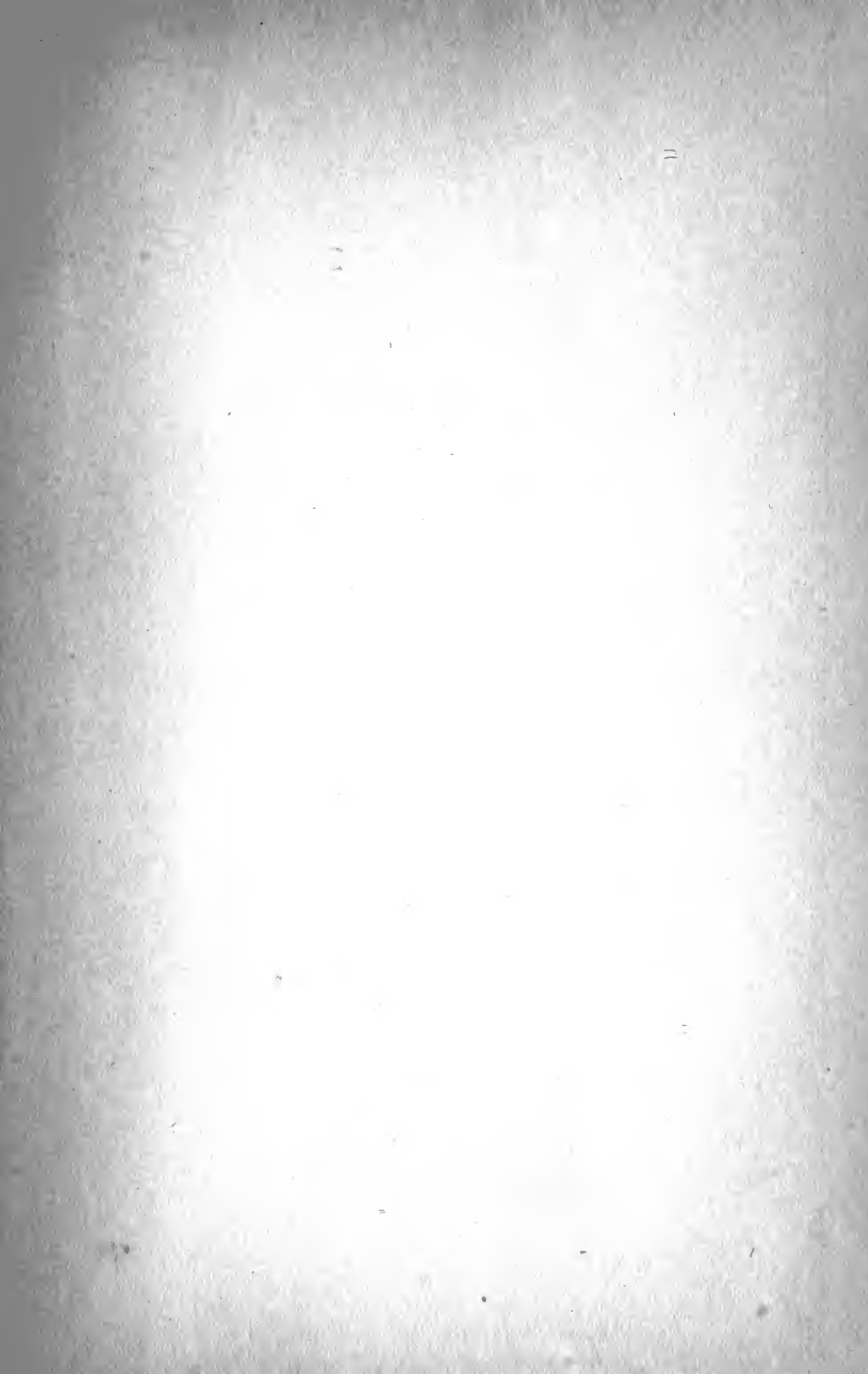
Of course we have made bungling work in telling this. Even great Paul did, and strained his sentences almost to the point of breaking, as when he said, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." There is more between the lines of the Bible than there is in the lines. We spend a good deal of time trying to understand what the Bible does say; we might profitably spend a little time every day in trying to understand what the Bible does not say. It is generally the case that things are discovered by attempting to see a little more than is visible, going out to the end of the longest and highest promontory and looking off.

In such expressions as that just quoted from Paul, wherein he says, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," it needs no great discernment to see that he does not intend only to say that his life and experience are being managed by the control of Divine influence, as a vessel is driven by the wind or

thrust forward by the tide. To the degree in which we read down into the substance of the matter, we feel that there was that blending between himself and the Divine Spirit that it was all one whether he said or acted, or said that God acted in him. For a little distance frontier lines were erased. The same territory belonged to both circles. I do not make my meaning clear: my meaning is not clear to myself. But there is something great here, and we would rather see a mountain slope afar off than to own and fence a little patch of that slope and be able to plant a few hills of corn upon it. A loyal son is governed by his father; but it is the best element of that loyalty not that the son does what the father bids him do, or makes him do, but that the son has his father's spirit so reproduced in himself and so become a part of himself, and he so a partaker in his father's nature, that his one act is at the same instant both his act and his father's act. And when we pray that God will control us by His Spirit we certainly hardly expect that He is going to put His personality behind us, so as

to push us onward; or put His personality in front of us, so as to hold us backward. We would rather mean, would we not, that as children of His we are bound in the bundle of one life with Him, moving therefore at the impulse of energies that are ours without their ceasing to be His—somewhat perhaps as each separate storm-wave rolls in the expression of its own might, which is at the same time a part of the might of the sea; somewhat perhaps as each separate leaf or branch grows green in the expression of its own life, which is at the same time part of the life of the vine. This last is the Lord's illustration, not ours. "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch can not bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in Me." I in you, you in Me. Frontier lines gone. One in each other. A single bundle of life, human or Divine, either or both; a shareholder in God; up the Gemmi Pass toward the indistinguishable summit! [Toward the Illimitable Heights of Spiritual Greatness and Moral Grandeur! Unceasingly Onward! and Upward!]





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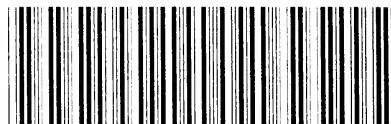
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